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New York

President:	Mr. Umarov/Mr. Sadykov	(Kazakhstan)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Netherlands	Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Sweden	Ms. Schoulgin Nyoni
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Mrs. Haley

Agenda

The situation in Libya

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Ghassan Salamé, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, and Ms. Hajer Sharief, co-founder of Together We Build It. Mr. Salamé and Ms. Sharief are joining the meeting via video-teleconference from Tunis.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Salamé, Ambassador Irina Schoulgin Nyoni, Deputy Permanent Representative and Chargé d'affaires of Sweden, on behalf of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, and Ms. Sharief.

I now give the floor to Mr. Salamé.

Mr. Salamé: I would like to congratulate Kazakhstan on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I also wish to thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to brief the Council on the work of the United Nations to address the crisis in Libya.

I wish to report that the United Nations is poised to increase its presence in Libya. Our compound has been prepared and protection arrangements made so that we can increase the number of staff who are staying and working in the capital — as security permits, of course.

At the same time, we are expanding our presence across the country and visiting communities throughout Libya. In the coming weeks and months, we will continue to reach out to more cities and towns. It is only by truly understanding the country that we can succeed in the implementation of the action plan for Libya and help its citizens put an end to a transition that is taking too long.

The second anniversary of the Libyan Political Agreement was on 17 December 2017. Despite very differing views about what the anniversary might entail, Libyans ultimately chose for the day to pass without violence or significant protest. The fact that the anniversary proceeded peacefully is in no small part due to the unity of the Council. The presidential statement of 14 December (S/PRST/2017/26) sent a clear message: the international community stands behind the Agreement and will not accept attempts to undermine it. That was reiterated by three neighbouring countries, whose Ministers for Foreign Affairs met in Tunis on 17 December 2017.

Whether it be the adoption of electoral legislation or appointments to sovereign positions, such as Governor of the Central Bank of Libya, all actions need to proceed in line with the Agreement for its duration. In practice, that means harmony between the House of Representatives and the High State Council.

We must remain alert. Although 17 December is behind us, the spectre of violence remains present. Military forces are flexing their muscles in many parts of the country. Close to the border with Tunisia, clashes have occurred between forces affiliated with two rival communities.

The area in the eastern vicinity of Tripoli remains a worrying flashpoint. Tension has also heightened around the city of Derna. The very reason that I am not briefing the Council from Tripoli, as I had planned to do, but from Tunis, is because bloody clashes at the airport have halted all flights in and out of Mitiga airport for the whole week. Civilians — men and women and children — continue to be killed or injured in crossfire. Armed groups fight recklessly in residential areas with no thought for the safety of civilians.

The arms embargo has never been more important. It is for this reason that recent reports of a large shipment of explosives intercepted by the Greek Coast Guard are particularly alarming. A country with 20 million pieces of arms does not need a single piece more. I have received the Panel of Experts today, and its members are looking into this matter with the professionalism for which they are known. The efforts of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) have been pivotal to the relative quiet that Libya has enjoyed over recent months. These extremely time-consuming conflict-prevention efforts must continue if hope in the political process is to be maintained.

This fragile and shaky status quo is not sustainable. Libya needs a competent and efficient Government, one that can deliver the public services that the people desperately need, one that is able to unify their country's institutions, one that will preside over the elections that will end this transition. In our view, amending the Libyan Political Agreement is the most appropriate means for fulfilling that endeavour, and we have not wasted a single day in our push for it. I am encouraged by the efforts of members of the House of Representatives and of the High State Council to achieve this goal and by several initiatives generated to reach the consensus needed for that end. The work of the joint drafting committee has crystallized consensus on the adjustments to the executive authority. Although a formal agreement has yet to be reached, this consensus is desirable and it is reachable.

In line with the action plan, three goals are the ultimate focus of our work. First, with regard to the Constitution, Libya requires a strong, permanent legal framework. The transition cannot definitively end until Libya stands upon a true Constitution. The draft Constitution as provided by the Constitutional Drafting Assembly is currently undergoing judicial review. Out of respect for the Libyan judiciary, we await the decision of the courts. I expect this will be concluded very soon — in fact, in the next 10 days. Once a decision is reached, we will determine how we can best support the process.

Secondly, with respect to national rebuilding, the fabric of Libyan society is frayed and requires meaningful reconstitution if it is to be mended. Unless a national polity is rebuilt, no meaningful progress can be made in unifying institutions, preventing outbreaks of violence or achieving widespread acceptance of election results. Rebuilding a Libyan national polity necessitates two parallel efforts.

First, the United Nations has successfully facilitated numerous dialogues between local communities formerly in conflict. Agreements have been adopted and meaningful steps to address the past have been taken. Communities once at odds have shown their willingness to build a common future. The Government of National Accord has recently started to play its part in this effort, which has been demonstrated by its support for the Misrata-Tawergha Agreement and its provisional funding. On this matter, we will also do our part in particular to guarantee a safe return to that area.

Our other national rebuilding track consists of reaching out to the major players and groups previously marginalized. They are gradually being brought into the political fold as equal and accepted partners as long as they commit to the political process. Through town halls, shuttle visits and whatever other tools we have at our disposal, we are intensely working on tearing down the walls among Libyan political factions and untangling past local and political animosities, thus moving towards the national conference, which will provide a space for Libyans from all quarters to come together and adopt a common vision for Libya.

The third focus of our work is elections. On 6 December 2017, the High National Electoral Commission launched a voter-registration update. I am pleased by the remarkable eagerness that Libyan men and women have shown in registering. Our expectations for participation have been exceeded. Some 600,000 Libyans have newly registered to vote in just over six weeks. The number of people on the electoral register now exceeds 2 million and continues to rise. The United Nations has been able to provide the Commission with extensive technical support for voter registration and will continue to assess the arrangements for the next steps.

However, before credible elections can be conducted much work remains to be done. A constitutional framework must be agreed upon. The security conditions must be conducive to making the process free and fair. There must be confidence that the results will be accepted by all. For either the referendum, presidential or parliamentary elections, laws are also needed. Libya's relevant institutions have an obligation to produce the requisite legislation and to do so in a manner consistent with the Libyan Political Agreement. I urge these institutions to avoid mutual suspicion and unilateral action and to put the interests of the Libyan people above all other considerations.

I thank the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia for taking the time to meet with me and for their strong backing of the action plan for Libya. I also express my gratitude to the Kingdom of Morocco for receiving me and for its continued support for our work in Libya. It was an honour to meet with the Secretary General of the League of Arab States, whose support has been highly valued. This month, I also travelled to two of Libya's southern neighbours, where I had the privilege to meet with President Mahamadou Issoufou in the Niger and President Idriss Deby Itno

in Chad, two countries substantially affected by the evolution of the Libyan scene. I have greatly benefited from their wisdom.

Of utmost importance for UNSMIL is our relationship was the African Union (AU). This week I returned from Addis Ababa where I met with the AU Commission to discuss deepening our cooperation and the AU's support for Libya. Twice this month I had the honour to meet and have an exchange with AU Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat, and we shared common views on the way forward.

The political crisis in Libya has been accompanied by a humanitarian crisis of equal dimensions. Only a strong, effective Government can turn the tide and put an end to the suffering, but those suffering cannot wait. To address the most urgent needs, the United Nations will launch a humanitarian response plan next week. The plan will target those in especially vulnerable situations, focusing on such life-saving interventions as basic services, shelter, food and demining. The Stabilization Facility for Libya is another important tool to help communities. These concrete actions are now widely recognized by the Libyan people. I thank the donors who have contributed to either of these two funds, and I urge the Government of National Accord to do its part as well.

A matter of great humanitarian concern is the dire situation many migrants in Libya continue to face. I saw some of this situation first hand last month when I visited a detention centre in Gheryan. Further, we have evidence that many migrants are subject to grave abuses inside and outside official places of detention, including various forms of sexual violence. We keep pressing the authorities to eradicate these egregious crimes and bring those responsible to justice and, in view of several serious incidents against humanitarian actors in the conduct of their duties, I urge the Government to ensure their safety. I also salute the strong cooperation between the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations. As members of the Council know, a Task Force has been established between our three organizations and it has made progress in supporting voluntary returns of migrants. Co-chairing the operational group in Tunis, UNSMIL is dedicated to these efforts.

However, the concentration on migration should not allow us to forget those many Libyans held without judicial process and often subject to ill treatment. Failure to address custodial abuses fuels local conflicts and undermines national reconciliation and efforts to build a rule-of-law-based State.

Transformative change is overdue. Most worrying for us are the individual predatory agendas that continue to dominate at the expense of the collective good. No political solution can be durable unless an end is put to the predatory economics that have dominated the Libyan scene in the past few years, where public resources are more often than not used for various purposes other than in the service of the Libyan people.

Conflict over resources is indeed at the heart of the Libyan crisis. The Mission will not spare any effort to advocate that national wealth be directed towards the provision of public services rather than to special interests. This is all the more necessary as fuel shortages, electricity shortages and water shortages are common across the country. It is a painful irony that a country of such plenty is consistently so short of the necessities.

I would note once again that it is our collective responsibility to ensure that Libya's remaining frozen funds are effectively managed as a safeguard for the future. Additional work is still needed to make this truly happen.

As the Council is aware, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman visited Libya from 9 to 12 January. Mr. Feltman's visit was timely and very welcome. It was an opportunity to reinforce messages to the Libyan political and military leaders that it is time for compromise, in the interests of the Libyan people. On behalf of the Secretary-General, Mr. Feltman urged the Libyan interlocutors to truly commit to working together and implement the action plan to create the conditions necessary to end the transitional period.

I would once again like to express my appreciation to the Council for its steadfast commitment and support to the action plan for Libya and to our efforts to end the crisis in that country.

The President: I thank Mr. Salamé for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Schoulgin Nyoni.

Ms. Schoulgin Nyoni (Sweden): In accordance with paragraph 24 (e) of resolution 1970 (2011), of 26 February 2011, I have the honour to report to the Security Council on the work of the Committee established by the same resolution. The report covers the period from

17 November 2017 to 17 January 2018, during which time the Committee dealt with various aspects of the sanctions regime via the written silence procedure.

The Committee approved two requests for exemption to the arms embargo, both of them submitted under paragraph 9(c) of resolution 1970 (2011) by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). The Committee also received two post-delivery notifications, one from UNSMIL and the other from the Netherlands, for previously exempted items. The Committee further received an update from UNSMIL on issues faced during and after the transfer of exempted items. The post-delivery notification from the Netherlands also contained such information. The Committee responded to a letter from Turkey that voluntarily provided information on the donation of certain items that fell within the scope of the exception to the arms embargo contained in paragraph 10 of resolution 2095 (2013).

Concerning the assets freeze, the Committee responded to two requests for guidance, one received from Algeria and the other from a United Nations Department, on the scope and implementation of this measure.

With respect to the measures aimed at preventing illicit exports of petroleum, including crude oil and refined petroleum products, from Libya, the Council will recall that two vessels — the *Capricorn* and the *Lynn S* — are currently included in the Committee's sanctions list. During the period under review, the Committee received a letter from the Syrian Arab Republic informing it that the *Capricorn* had unloaded diesel oil in the tanks of the Syrian Company for Oil Transportation and that the Syrian Government had since informed all concerned authorities not to receive this vessel again. The reply from the Committee is still under consideration. On 27 November 2017, based on information received from its Panel of Experts, the Committee updated the list entry of the *Capricorn*, indicating that the flag State, previously Tanzania, was now unknown.

As regards the *Lynn S*, based on information received from Libya and from the Panel of Experts, the Committee has written letters to the reported States of destination, seeking their clarifications on the matter.

On 16 January 2018, the Committee received the interim report of the Panel of Experts pursuant to paragraph 14 of resolution 2362 (2017). The Committee is scheduled to discuss the report and its recommendations on 9 February.

The President: I thank Ambassador Schoulgin Nyoni for her briefing.

I now call on Ms. Sharief.

Ms. Sharief: This opportunity to address the Security Council is an opportunity any member of Libyan civil society would appreciate. I want to thank Kazakhstan for inviting me today as a representative of the Together We Build It organization to share my civil-society perspective with the Council.

The Libya we are discussing today is no longer the wealthy country it used to be. Nowadays women, men, youth and even elderly people sleep in front of banks in the hope that they can withdraw some cash to cover their basic needs. In hospitals, patients must provide their own medications, as hospitals do not have even these essential resources.

Just last week I saw the extensive bruises covering a fellow activist's face after she was badly beaten by members of an armed group in the streets of Tripoli. In 2011, the Security Council adopted resolution 1973 (2011), which called for the protection of Libyan civilians.

The Libya we are discussing today is witnessing forms of violence that go far beyond what the Security Council aimed to protect against in 2011. For many Libyans at that time, the resolution was a life-saver. It was a rescue signal indicating that the international community and the Security Council were willing to do everything in their power to protect civilians.

Our hope turned to despair as many Libyans then quickly felt abandoned by the international community and the Council. There was no follow-up plan or strategy to empower the Libyan people beyond the military intervention. Neither was there a plan for recovery from the extreme form of violence that was introduced into the society in 2011.

While volunteering at Tripoli central hospital during the war of 2011, I was struck by the fact that the first patient I met was not the typical war victim I used to see in the media. He was a civilian who had been injured on his way to the grocery store. I still remember his son's words when his father passed away a few days later: "What did my father do to them?", asked the young boy through his tears. At that very

moment, I knew that the actions of the international community had not changed only a political regime; they had changed people's lives dramatically. However, despite all the disappointments, extreme violence and lack of resources the country is enduring, Libyans are doing their best to ensure that life goes on.

In Libya, support from the international community continues to be greatly needed, but this support going forward must be completely and urgently redesigned to empower the Libyan people, including men and youth, to play an active role in peacebuilding. We cannot have a repeat of the 2011 international support efforts, which directly affected power structures on the ground.

As such, when implementing the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) action plan on Libya, crucial questions therefore need to be addressed. Who receives support from the international community? Who is invited to take part in negotiations, and who needs mediation? Who is recognized by the action plan as an important player, and what security threats will the action plan identify and prioritize?

For example, the threat of open borders in Libya is a matter of people's security, as it poses the threat of arms smuggling and human trafficking. However, most of the international community's recent efforts address it only as a threat posed by immigration. For Libya, violent extremism is a threat to personal freedom and human rights, but for the international community it is addressed only as an external threat to the West.

The role of civil society must be a necessary focus of the UNSMIL action plan. In that regard, I would like to focus on women and youth. In Libya, there are many national and local initiatives that strengthen peacebuilding, conflict prevention and conflict resolution. My organization — Together We Build It — created the 1325 Network in Libya, which works in different parts of the country to provide women and young people with a platform for self-development in areas related to human security and countering and preventing violent extremism.

The work of my organization as a civil society actor has inspired many women and young people to become active in promoting peace in the country. We recently launched a new platform called Peace and Security from the Libyan Woman's Perspective, in which more than 1,000 Libyan women participated in fewer than three days. This shows that women and young people participate in peace efforts whenever the opportunity arises. However, their efforts must be supported by the international community so that the outcome of their work will be reflected throughout the country.

Determining the real problem is the first step towards the right solution. As such, the problem in Libya is not only a conflict-related issue; it matters how parties to the conflict communicate with each other. Part of the Libyan solution would be to establish communication channels not only among the parties directly involved in the conflict, but among all actors in Libya — State actors and non-State actors, including civil society. Such channels must ensure that all actors have an equal opportunity and the space to communicate feedback, opinions and feelings with each other.

If UNSMIL's action plan is to be a shared agenda where international interests meet Libyan priorities and needs, then the implementation of every aspect of the plan must be systematically integrated with resolutions 1325 (2000) and 2250 (2015). Those resolutions should serve as guidelines for the implementation of the action plan, not only to position women and young people to lead mediation and conflict resolution efforts, but also to address the long-term structural issues that often fail to sustain peace. As such, arising from our belief in the United Nations and its principles, and based on our belief that peace is based on equality, justice, demilitarized security, non-violence and inclusive social transformation, we urge UNSMIL and the Security Council to ensure the full implementation of the recently adopted resolution 2376 (2017), and take the gender perspective into account by ensuring the full and effective participation of women in the democratic transition process, reconciliation efforts, the security sector and national institutions, in line with resolution 1325 (2000). Moreover, for resolution 2376 (2017) to be implemented, specific human and financial resources must be allocated.

Women make up more than 50 per cent of Libyan society and young people make up more than 50 per cent. It is clear from the political process that the people in charge of bringing about sustainable peace in our country, our leadership, do not reflect the demographic structure of our country. We would like to see greater representation and participation of women and youth throughout the political process. We would also like UNSMIL to ensure the meaningful participation of women and young people in the upcoming national conference. We would like to see women and young people taking part in all conference meetings — open

and closed-door meetings alike. Furthermore, we would like the upcoming elections laws to ensure that women and young people have a fair chance to participate, with a minimum quota for women and a separate one for youth. In addition, as Libyan civil society, we would like the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to hold regular meetings with women and young people in order to consult with them on all aspects of UNSMIL's action plan; strengthen disarmament efforts as disarmament is the key element in preventing the further escalation of conflict; and promote the full and effective participation of women and young people in all disarmament-related discussions.

A violence-free society is one in which Libyans desire to live. Moreover, ensuring investigations into and the monitoring of human rights violations, including sexual violence, the safety, dignity and longer-term needs of survivors and their families should be at the heart of the such efforts. Grass-roots civil society organizations, including local women and youth organizations, should be supported in their efforts to advocate that approach.

I would like to conclude my statement by echoing the words of Tawfik Bin Saud, a young activist who was shot dead in 2014. He stated that working for peace should never stop; only war should stop. All Libyans dream of prosperity, peace and stability. The responsibility to make that dream come true rests on the Council's shoulders.

The President: I thank Ms. Sharief for her statement.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): I thank Mr. Salamé and Ms. Schoulgin Nyoni for their briefings.

I also warmly welcome and thank Ms. Sharief, our civil society briefer, who conveyed a very powerful message and eloquently highlighted the importance of an inclusive peace process that includes, in particular, women and youth. Perhaps as a follow-up to the discussion, it would be helpful to hear more from the United Nations Support Mission in Libya about how it integrates the gender perspective in its work.

Let me begin by welcoming the update of Special Representative Salamé on the political process and by reiterating the United Kingdom's full support for his work. In our presidential statement of 14 December 2017 (S/PRST/2017/26), we in the Security Council urged all parties to support the political process in a spirit of compromise for the sake of the Libyan people. That must include support for the efforts of Special Representative Salamé to secure consent to amend the Libyan Political Agreement and commitment to the sequencing of the United Nations action plan.

As Ms. Sharief highlighted, civil society has an essential role to play in ensuring that the voices of the people are also heard during discussions on the future of their country. All Libyans, regardless of their age, gender or where they are from, must feel represented and understood by their political leaders. That will encourage Libyans to support their political leadership and build trust in the political process. The greatest immediate need is the establishment of a more inclusive political platform, which is essential to creating an executive better able to improve the security, human rights and economic conditions in Libya. A more inclusive political settlement would also build a context more conducive to preparing for elections. We welcome the Special Representative's emphasis on ensuring the right conditions are in place ahead of elections, including the necessary political, legislative and security preparations to guarantee their success.

As we saw from clashes at Mitiga Airport on Monday, the security situation in Libya remains of deep concern. As we have stated, there can be no military solution in Libya. All parties must exercise restraint and express their support for national reconciliation, which must include the reconciliation of the security forces. Unified security forces, under the command of the civilian Government, which represent and work for all Libyans will also enable the threat posed by extremist groups to be tackled in a sustainable way. They will help bring an end to the impunity of armed groups, which are inextricably linked to the gravely concerning human rights situation.

Ungoverned spaces in Libya create the conditions for abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, which take place against civilians, internally displaced persons and migrants. We fully support the work of the African Union-European Union-United Nations Task Force in tackling slavery in Libya. We call on all parties that are suspected of committing, ordering or failing to prevent such human rights abuses and violations to be fully investigated, and if found guilty, to be held to account for their actions. We also stand ready to consider the sanctioning of individuals involved in people trafficking in modern slavery.

We are also concerned by reported restrictions of civil and political freedoms and the intimidation of civil society organizations, public servants, religious groups and national minorities, including recent attacks on Sufi shrines and Amazigh representatives. These groups must be allowed to participate in Libyan society and the political process.

Finally, with regard to the economic situation, the Council needs to continue to protect the Libyan people from economic hardship, including by supporting the restoration of the economy and the delivery of service across the country. We must act robustly against attempts to illicitly sell oil and establish parallel institutions. We need to continue to ensure that sanctions measures keep up with the situation on the ground. That includes the work we have done to address fuel oil smuggling. However, we should also be ready to rectify inadvertent consequences, such as addressing the depreciation of frozen Libyan Investment Authority funds, which remain frozen at the Libyan Government's request until their eventual return for the benefit of the Libyan people.

A stable, unified, inclusive Government is the best way to improve the security conditions, the economic fortunes and human rights situation for millions of Libyans. It will also improve global peace and security and our ability to address the challenges of migration. We must continue to stand together in support of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Salamé's efforts to achieve this. We, like him, urge Libya's political leaders to put their country first.

Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren (Netherlands): The Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to express its sincere thanks to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ghassan Salamé, Ambassador Schoulgin Nyoni and Ms. Hajer Sharief for their clear statements. We welcome the call of Ms. Sharief for an inclusive approach, including the perspective of civil society, particularly women and youth.

Please allow me to focus on three important aspects: ending the political crisis, the human rights situation and combating impunity, and coordinating international efforts.

My first point concerns the political process. The year 2018 will be crucial for Libya. The Libyan people have long awaited an end to their country's political transition. The current window of opportunity to achieve this, through the successful implementation of the action plan, should not be missed. We express our deep concern about Monday's clashes at Mitiga Airport, which regrettably are symptomatic of the fragile security context in which Libya's transition is taking place.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands fully supports Special Representative of the Secretary-General Salamé's action plan. Its success will depend, above all, on the political will and courage of the Libyan parties to take the required steps. We call on all parties to continue to work within the framework of the Libyan Political Agreement. This Agreement remains the only viable framework to end the Libyan political crisis. In this context, we urge the delegations of the House of Representatives and the High State Council to swiftly finalize their negotiations on the limited amending of the Libyan Political Agreement. To thoroughly prepare for elections, the sequencing of the steps of the action plan will be of key importance. Concrete results from the negotiations on amendments will give the necessary boost to its implementation and will provide the foundations for the next stage of convening a national conference.

My second point concerns the human rights situation and the prevailing culture of impunity in Libya. The Kingdom of the Netherlands remains deeply concerned about serious human rights violations and abuses that continue throughout Libya. The human rights situation of migrants and refugees remains of particular concern. Immediate steps need to be taken to improve their plight, and the international community, including the Council, should do more. Dismantling the criminal trafficking networks that exploit migrants and refugees and destabilize Libya requires our specific attention. During our membership of the Council, including through the Libya sanctions regime, we will explore new avenues in combating these inhumane practices.

We welcome the resolute action taken by the International Organization for Migration, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, countries of origin and local authorities to facilitate the safe return home of a growing number of migrants who were facing dire conditions in Libya. This shows the importance of our strengthened cooperation. Joint efforts can lead to concrete and humane solutions in the very complex field of migration.

Impunity in Libya remains a grave problem. In 2014, Salwa Bugaighis, a leading women's right advocate

in Libya, was brutally murdered. Her case is just one example among many that have yet to be investigated and prosecuted. We urge all parties to respect human rights and international humanitarian law and reiterate that all those responsible for violations and abuses must be brought to justice. It is essential that we answer the calls for accountability in line with resolutions 1970 (2011) and 2174 (2014). Their prosecution will help prevent further atrocities and thereby contribute to sustaining peace. In that regard, we welcome the efforts of the International Criminal Court and call upon the Libyan Government, and in fact all concerned, to cooperate fully with the Court and the Prosecutor.

This brings me to my third point, namely, that of the coordination of international efforts in Libya. We welcome the progress made in the return of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) to Libya. The Mission's partial relocation to Tripoli is an important step forward. We look forward to the further return to other parts of Libya, to the extent that the security situation will allow it. The expansion of UNSMIL's presence in Libya will also benefit its coordinating role in the fields of humanitarian aid, security and human rights, which remains vital.

We welcome the progress made by the joint police and security programme of UNSMIL and the United Nations Development Programme in improving the security situation in Tripoli, though Monday's clashes show that no progress can be taken for granted.

In conclusion, with the launch of the action plan in September the Libyan parties have been presented with a new opportunity to direct their country towards a future of stability and prosperity. It is now up to them to show the courage and leadership to make the necessary compromises.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by warmly thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ghassan Salamé for his very valuable briefing and commend his ongoing efforts to find a political solution. On behalf of France, I assure him of our full steadfast support. I also thank Ms. Hajer Sharief for allowing us to hear the voice of Libyan civil society. She stressed the importance, for Libya and in general, of enabling effective women's participation in peace processes. Finally, I thank the Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden for her enlightened briefing on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya.

I would like to underscore three principal points.

My first point is that, with regard to the political situation in Libya, the stabilization of the country is more than ever a priority for France. The implementation of the Special Representative's action plan is the key to easing tensions and achieving an inclusive political solution. We therefore continue to give our full support to Special Representative Ghassan Salamé in that endeavour. The first positive steps have already been undertaken in the political process. Consultations between the two chambers have led to a consensus on key points in the revision of the Skhirat Political Agreement. That Agreement remains the only valid and legitimate framework throughout the transition, as the Council recalled in its statement of 14 December 2017 (S/PRST/2017/26). However, we must now go further. We must move forward in drafting the constitution and all stakeholders must remain engaged throughout the two next steps.

First, the inclusive national conference will be decisive, as it should make it possible to contribute to the national reconciliation of all Libyans and to garner the necessary political consensus for the success of the elections.

The second deadline is the holding of a transparent and democratic electoral process in 2018 that will enable the people of Libya to express themselves. As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General pointed out, the number of registered voters recently exceeded 2 million, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Salamé, who is making every effort to ensure the success of the elections. We congratulate him, and the international community must support a credible and transparent electoral process. Mr. Salamé is actively making preparations for those two deadlines, and we can appreciate how lengthy the preparation process is. The Security Council must fully support him and call on all Libyan stakeholders to commit resolutely and sincerely to the implementation of its action plan. That is the message of the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jean-Yves Le Drian, delivered to Mr. Al-Sarraj and Mr. Haftar when he visited Libya on 21 December.

My second message, in the context of the volatile situation on the ground, is to insist that there can be no military solution in Libya and that all actors must convince themselves of that. In recent days, radical militias have launched a worrisome new offensive in Tripoli, in the Sirte region where Da'esh continues

its abuses. France condemns such use of armed force. Defeating terrorism in Libya once and for all and ensuring sustainable security will require a political solution centred around national reconciliation and the restoration of a State with full control of all its territory.

In that context, the Constitution and the building of a unified national security architecture under civilian authority is an absolute priority. In this fragile security context, the economic and humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate. The Council cannot ignore that situation, which weighs heavily on political balances. Our role is also to ensure that all Libyans can enjoy the country's significant wealth. I am referring particularly to Libya's oil resources, which should remain under the exclusive control of the Government of National Accord, pursuant to Council resolutions. We must not hesitate to strengthen the sanctions mechanism to fight against the parallel economy that stokes political divisions.

Finally, I wish to address the situation of migrants passing through Libya, who are victims of serious human rights violations. We are maintaining close dialogue with our partners and the Libyan authorities in order to make progress in fulfilling the commitments to ensure that migrants can received dignified treatment and in facilitating cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner as it relates to access to detention centres and the evacuation of refugees and migrants. The issue of migrations was also at the heart of our Minister's visit to Libya on 21 December. The Council has highlighted the importance for perpetrators of such crimes to be prosecuted by the Libyan judiciary, but individuals responsible for human trafficking and the trafficking of migrants must also be sanctioned under the existing United Nations regime. We must continue to work together in that regard.

Moreover, Libya must meet its obligation to cooperate with the International Criminal Court and help it carry out its investigations and issue arrest warrants. That would be an important signal of the commitment of Libyan actors to international criminal justice and to the fight against impunity, which are essential for securing the trust of the Libyan population.

In conclusion, I note that all of our efforts must converge on supporting Mr. Salamé's plan of action. The people of Libya, with the support of the international community, have a major interest in seeing their country advance towards national reconciliation and political consensus. In that regard, our support for the United Nations and our unity within the Council will be more important than ever if we are to successful navigate the different stages of the action plan. France pledges its full mobilization to that end.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the tireless efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Mr. Ghassan Salamé, to achieve peace and stability in Libya and secure a prosperous future for our Libyan brothers. In this regard, we cannot but highly value the role of UNSMIL in those efforts.

I also thank the Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden, Ms. Schoulgin Nyoni, for her briefing on the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya. I also extend my thanks for the valuable information provided by Ms. Hajer Sharief on the vital role of civil society to restabilize Libya.

In Kuwait's first meeting to discuss the situation in Libya, I would like to reaffirm our full and firm commitment to supporting all United Nations efforts to put an end to the crisis in Libya, and most importantly to achieve the desired objectives of the United Nations action plan for Libya, including amending the Libyan Political Agreement, organizing a national conference, preparing for the elections and providing and delivering humanitarian assistance to those in need, especially at this crucial stage in the history of the sisterly State of Libya.

At the same time, we appreciate the great efforts made by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, during his visit to Libya last week to consolidate the democratic transition process. Almost four months have passed since the Secretary-General presented his action plan. Today, we are witnessing encouraging signs and important steps to reinvigorate the Libyan political process. We have seen that in the detailed and extensive briefing made by Mr. Salamé, which reflects the extent of progress made in the country since his last briefing before the Council (S/PV.8104).

We shall spare no effort to ensure the unity of the Council and to avoid anything that might undermine the unity of the Libyan people and the prospects of security and stability in Libya under the Libyan Political Agreement. We believe that the Agreement

is the best way to achieve a Libyan-led comprehensive political solution, to reach a political settlement for the Libyan crisis and to put an end to the deterioration in the country. In that context, we stress the need for all Libyans to adhere to paragraph 5 of resolution 2259 (2015), which rejects all attempts to undermine the Libyan-led political process facilitated by the United Nations. In that regard, we welcome the important role of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord and the role of all Libyan leaders in fostering national reconciliation.

We have been closely following the meetings of the joint drafting committee of the House of Representatives and the High State Council through the rounds of meetings hosted by Tunisia, to which we are thankful, in order to reform the Political Agreement. In that regard, we welcome the progress made in reconciling the positions of Libyan parties and agreeing on a reasonable and applicable time frame. We also stress the need for all Libyan parties to complete the rounds of negotiations in respect of introducing the necessary amendments to the Political Agreement, especially since its implementation is considered vital to the success of the political transition process.

We urge our Libyan brothers to step up their efforts to revitalize the political process for the sake of ensuring unified and stable governance with broad representation under the Political Agreement. That would allow for the convening of the national conference as a prelude to adopting an electoral and constitutional framework that would guarantee the holding this year of general elections that are acceptable to all Libyans. Those efforts must include the adoption of a new electoral law to organize the polling process and to allow for the High National Electoral Commission to complete the electoral list and the registration campaign as a primary factor for the success of the elections.

We emphasize the importance of creating the right conditions for holding the elections, at both the security and the technical levels, so as to ensure the participation of the largest number of Libyans. We urge the international community and regional organizations to provide the necessary support for, and supervision of, the elections in order to guarantee their integrity. We call on the House of Representatives to finalize the new Libyan constitution, which will not be achieved unless national interests prevail over all other considerations. Any further delay will only prolong the suffering of the Libyan people.

The State of Kuwait has followed with great concern the recent violence in a number of Libyan cities, which claimed the lives of many innocent people. In that regard, we condemn in the strongest terms the assassination of the Mayor of Misrata, Mr. Mohamad Eshtewi, in late December. We therefore call on the Libyan authorities to bring the perpetrators of such crimes to justice in order to prevent impunity. We also emphasize the need for all parties to comply with and respect the ceasefire agreed on in Paris on 25 July 2017, and to fully comply with the provisions of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We also condemn all terrorist acts in Libya and urge that terrorism be combated in all its forms and manifestations under a unified civilian Government. Furthermore, we reiterate the importance of unifying and strengthening the Libyan armed forces, under the State military institution, to enable them to deal with such dangers and to prevent them.

There is no doubt that the difficulties facing the Libyan people are clearly increasing as a result of the economic situation, which is deteriorating day by day owing to the political instability. We agree with Mr. Salamé regarding the need for concerted international efforts to help the Libyan people to take full advantage of the enormous wealth in Libya. We commend the decision to establish a national fund to compensate the victims of the conflict and hope that adequate solutions will be found with regard to Libyan foreign investments to prevent any losses.

Regrettably, the problem of illegal migration remains a real obstacle to achieving the security and stability in Libya to which we all aspire, in particular following the emergence of heinous practices of slavery against a number of migrants late last year. We condemn such practices in the strongest terms and emphasize the need for the international community, in general, and the countries of origin and destination, in particular, to address the root causes of that problem, especially since Libya is a transit country and therefore suffers as much as the destination cuntries.

In conclusion, we reaffirm the need to broaden the dialogue on the amendments to the Libyan Political Agreement. We believe that all participating parties should be sufficiently flexible in order to achieve the desired outcome.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We express our gratitude

to Mr. Ghassan Salamé, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, for his briefing. We also take this opportunity to reiterate to him our support in his difficult responsibilities. In addition, we thank Ambassador Irina Schoulgin Nyoni for her briefing on the activities of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya. We also thank Ms. Hajer Sharief for her briefing and the information she provided to us. Her candidness, strength and commitment regarding the destiny of her country fills us with hope for the future of Libya.

My delegation highlights the commitment to and readiness for political dialogue shown by the parties at the meetings of the joint drafting committee, held in September and October 2017, to reach joint agreements that provide for the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement. We believe that such willingness should be maintained and reflected in concrete results that will make it possible to stabilize Libya.

In that regard, we look forward to the holding of the national conference to be held in February. We hope that it will be a space for encounter, reflection and reconciliation that will allow the Libyan people as a whole to move forward decisively in resolving the structural problems facing them.

Moreover, we firmly believe that progress must continue to be made on the results achieved by the constituent assembly and that the constitutional framework must be strengthened in order to develop the complete normative infrastructure for the establishment of reliable and capable institutions to strengthen the Libyan political process.

Likewise, we acknowledge that the progress made by the Libyan High National Electoral Commission in voter registration is a fundamental step that will make it possible to hold the elections planned for this year. We call for such efforts to continue steadily until all voters are registered.

In that regard, we pay tribute to, and emphasize the efforts being made by, the various regional organizations and stakeholders, such as the African Union, to strengthen, support and cooperate in the implementation of the Libyan political process and the action plan established by the Special Representative.

However, we note with great concern that the situation with regard to migrants and refugees has not improved, since, according to the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees of 10 January, in the first days of the year, the Libyan Coast Guard recovered the bodies of 443 people who lost their lives trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea. Unfortunately, those victims must be added to the more than 5,000 deaths registered during 2017 off the coast of Libya.

In addition, we are very concerned about the ongoing reports of violations of the rights of migrants who end up being held indefinitely in detention centres under appalling conditions and are often subjected to degrading treatment, torture, the denial of medical assistance and sexual violence, not to mention the disturbing reports of the existence of slave markets. In that regard, we call on the parties to make all necessary efforts to prevent abuses and violations of the human rights of migrants in centres under their control. We remind them that they must meet their obligations under international humanitarian law and ensure respect for the rights of those people. We once again reiterate our call on the Libyan authorities to begin the relevant investigations to make it possible to identify those responsible for such violations so that they can be immediately brought to justice and answer for their actions.

Moreover, we regret the reports of armed clashes in the city of Tripoli on Monday, 15 January, in which at least 20 deaths were recorded. We note with deep concern that there are still outbreaks of violence to the detriment of the security and integrity of the civilian population. In that context, we again call on the parties and local stakeholders to lay down their weapons and to avoid all calls to violence, since such attitudes not only threaten the lives of hundreds of innocent people but also disregard and violate the progress made to date in implementing the Libyan Political Agreement. We remind all stakeholders and parties involved that the only option for resolving the conflict is through compliance with the Libyan Political Agreement as recognized by resolution 2259 (2015). We reaffirm that its implementation is crucial to completing the political transition, as the Council stated in the presidential statement of 14 December 2017 (S/PRST/2017/26).

In conclusion, it is important to reiterate and to bear in mind that the impact that the Libyan conflict has had on the security situation in the region is a direct consequence of the interventionist practices and the regime-change policies, which have had repercussions

for the Sahel, leading to the outbreak of chaos, terrorism and violence with unfortunate results that continue to play out to this day.

Ms. Guadey (Ethiopia): We express appreciation to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ghassan Salamé for his briefing as well as for his continued diplomatic endeavours to bring about lasting peace and stability in Libya. We also Sweden's leadership of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) and thank the Deputy Permanent Representative, Ambassador Irina Schoulgin Nyoni, for her briefing on the activities of the Committee. We also thank Ms. Hajer Sharief for her remarks.

We once again reiterate our support for the United Nations action plan endorsed by the Security Council in its efforts to bring about a Libyan-owned political solution under the auspices of the United Nations. We commend the Special Representative for his continued efforts to facilitate the implementation of the action plan in close collaboration with the Libyans and other stakeholders. It is encouraging that progress has been made on a limited amendment of the Libyan Political Agreement, which we believe remains the only viable framework for ending the transitional period.

We also appreciate the provision of assistance by the United Nations to the relevant Libyan authorities in order to facilitate the holding of elections in 2018. We believe the registration of more than 2 million voters demonstrates the commitment and readiness of the Libyans to engage in a democratic electoral process that would end the transitional period. Furthermore, the efforts of the Special Representative to promote local reconciliation and dialogue, including through the holding of several town hall meetings and preparations to hold a national conference, will contribute to addressing the internal division among Libyans and help foster a spirit of harmonious coexistence among all segments of society.

We recognize that serious challenges remain in fully implementing the action plan, including the lack of effective and unified State institutions, insecurity — including the recent outbreak of fighting in Tripoli — and human trafficking, inter alia. Therefore, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General's continued efforts to implement the United Nations action plan requires more coordinated and coherent support from Libyans and the international community. In that regard, we urge all Libyan actors to continue their engagement in the political process in a constructive spirit with a view to finding a lasting political solution and realizing the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people.

To seize the current window of opportunity, the United Nations should further strengthen its partnership with Libyans. In that regard, we welcome the recent visit of Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman to Libya, which further demonstrated the commitment and readiness of the United Nations to support Libyans in their endeavours aimed at bringing about peace and stability.

The international community, and in particular the Security Council, should also continue to support the implementation of the action plan. We believe the Council's presidential statement of 14 December 2017 (S/PRST/2017/26) sent the right message, and its full implementation will be vital to accelerating the progress already made with respect to the action plan.

The role of neighbouring countries and regional organizations also remains critical to ending the Libyan crisis. In that regard, we welcome the visit of the Special Representative to Addis Ababa and commend him for holding useful and extensive discussions with senior officials of the African Union (AU), including the Chairperson of the AU Commission. We believe that such meetings could further strengthen coordination and ensure greater collaboration between the two organizations with a view to achieving lasting peace in Libya.

The agreement reached between the two organizations to work together to build consensus among Libyans, unify the Libyan institutions, form an inclusive national Government, hold free and fair elections in the country based on the relevant decisions of the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council, and build on the African Union road map and the United Nations action plan is very welcome. In addition, addressing the plight of migrants should also remain one of the top priorities of the international community.

Finally, I would like to conclude by reiterating our support for the Special Representative and the work that he has been doing to facilitate the implementation of the United Nations action plan. We all know that the road ahead will not be easy, which is why it is vital to further galvanize the support of the Libyans themselves

and the international community in order to bring to fruition a Libyan-led political solution under the auspices of the United Nations.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ghassan Salamé for his useful briefing on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) as well as on current developments in the country. In addition, I would like to thank Ms. Hajer Sharief for her valuable remarks on the current needs of, and challenges to, civil society in Libya. I also thank Ambassador Irina Schoulgin Nyoni for her helpful briefing on the ongoing work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya.

We are committed to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Libya. We believe that the Libyan Political Agreement is the only framework for an inclusive political solution to the conflict during the transition period. We commend the United Nations action plan presented by Mr. Salamé last September as the most appropriate solution to the issue of Libyan national reconciliation. We therefore encourage all Libyans to work together in a spirit of compromise to finalize the political transformation. We also wish to reiterate the importance of the participation of women in the process.

We commend the project undertaken to bring about national reconciliation in Libya, which is supported by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund and implemented by UNSMIL and the United Nations Development Programme, as it creates the conditions for building the trust needed for national reconciliation. In that regard, we take note of the Charter for Peaceful Coexistence ,adopted in Fezzan last December.

However, we are concerned about the deteriorating situation in the country, including the immigration crisis and the threat it poses to regional and international peace and security. In that regard, we call on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration, to address the root causes of large movements of people, including forced displacement, unmanaged immigration and trafficking in persons, in order to prevent exploitation of refugees and migrants by smugglers and human traffickers. All refugees and migrants should be treated with humanity and dignity. We therefore urge and encourage the Libyan authorities to take concrete steps to stamp out human rights violations and abuses in centres under their control, remove those reasonably suspected of carrying out violence, investigate and prosecute those responsible and publicly signal that such abuses will no longer be tolerated.

Poland calls for an international order based on respect for international law and the delivery of justice. We also support holding accountable those who obstruct and undermine the Libyan Political Agreement.

Mrs. Haley (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Salamé, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden and Ms. Sharief for their briefings.

When we talk about Libya today, so many of the problems we face go back to one key issue: respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. This conflict began when the Libyan people rejected the Al-Qadhafi regime's decades of oppression and tyranny. That brutal dictatorship left Libya with weak institutions, which gave political spoilers, criminal gangs and terrorists a chance to exploit Libya for their own purposes. After organizing a revolution to demand a more stable, unified and prosperous future for all, the Libyan people have yet to achieve that fundamental goal. That is why the United States stands firmly behind the efforts of Special Representative Salamé and behind implementation of the United Nations action plan.

As we have said many times before, political dialogue and reconciliation is the only way forward. There is no alternative to the United Nations process. There is a window of opportunity right now for Council members to push for new momentum in the political process, and that is where we must focus all of our efforts.

The recent video of Afghan migrants being sold into slavery shows the dire consequences of allowing Libya's security vacuum to continue. It was a profoundly disturbing sight. The existence of slave markets anywhere in the world must offend the conscience of every decent human being. These heinous abuses of human rights must come to an end.

We appreciate that Libya's Government of National Accord swiftly condemned slavery in all forms and made a commitment to investigate and hold those responsible to account. Such an investigation should proceed quickly and transparently. An untold number

of migrants continue to be detained in camps outside of Government control, where their captors assault them and deprive them of food.

This ongoing crisis shows just how urgent it is to support Libyan efforts to stabilize the country. The Libyan people deserve a Government able to provide basic services, enforce the rule of law and guarantee security, including the protection of the most vulnerable. The United States is committed to the humane treatment and protection of migrants and refugees. We strongly support the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in their work to improve conditions for migrants in Libya and to help those with claims to protection.

Since 2011, we have contributed generously to these organizations to address this regional crisis, including more than $150 million to ease suffering in Libya, including support for refugees, vulnerable migrants and the internally displaced.

But there is much more work to do. We appreciate Libya's cooperation with UNHCR and the IOM and urge them to deepen this collaboration. As the Security Council, we can look for opportunities to identify and designate for sanctions the individuals and criminal networks responsible for the human rights abuses aimed at migrants. The United States will also continue its efforts with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and other United Nations agencies to strengthen Libyan police and security institutions, and we urge others to join us.

Libya's wealth and natural resources are also at risk. These are resources that should be protected and used to benefit all Libyans. But political spoilers and criminal gangs are diverting these assets for themselves. The United States strongly condemns these actions. We are especially concerned about fuel-smuggling, and we will continue to press the Security Council to sanction any vessels involved in such criminal activities. We expect all States Members of the United Nations to fully comply with their obligations regarding ship designations.

Stepping up sanctions enforcement would be another step towards disrupting the criminal networks that contribute to the instability in Libya. While the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham has been weakened in Libya, the threat of terrorism is very real. Libya must not be a safe haven for terrorists to plot attacks, and terrorist groups must be defeated to secure a peaceful future for the Libyan people.

The only viable solution to these security, economic and migration challenges is a political solution to the current crisis. The United States is committed to a strong, unified Libya, which is why President Trump hosted Libyan Prime Minister Faiez Mustafa Serraj in Washington, D.C., recently. The United States commends Prime Minister Serraj's leadership and the efforts of the Government of National Accord to support a political solution.

There is no room here for political spoilers. The United States will oppose attempts to impose a military solution to this political crisis, which would further undermine Libya's stability. Those who pursue a military solution will wind up helping terrorist groups that thrive on instability. The only legitimate path to power is through free and fair elections. We welcome the recent progress with voter registration in Libya, including significant numbers of youth and women who have already signed up to vote.

The United States is providing assistance to Libya's High National Electoral Commission to help prepare as well. To build on this progress, the House of Representatives must uphold its commitment to pass laws for a constitutional referendum and for elections this year, in consultation with the High State Council.

As the Libyans prepare for elections, we support United Nations efforts to promote more effective and accountable governance for this transitional period. All Libyan parties should engage constructively with the United Nations to strengthen the Libyan Political Agreement.

The Security Council has affirmed that the Libyan Political Agreement must remain the framework for the political process throughout the country's transitional period. The fact is that after decades of tyranny followed by years of fighting and chaos, the Libyan people deserve a better future. Libya's political leaders must set aside their personal agendas and come together for the sake of peace. The Libyan people deserve a stable, unified, democratic Government with institutions that are capable of stamping out the abuses of criminal networks and non-State militias.

The door to a more peaceful Libya is open through engagement with the United Nations political process.

The United States urges all parties in Libya to seize this opportunity without further delay.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to express my thanks to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Mr. Ghassan Salamé, and his team for their broad-ranging and detailed report on the situation in Libya.

I would also like to thank the Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden, Ambassador Irina Schoulgin Nyoni, for her outstanding briefing in her capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya. Her input helps us to better understand the situation in the country. We would also like to thank Ms. Hajer Sharief, co-founder of Together We Build It, for her very illuminating briefing.

Since 2011, Equatorial Guinea has been closely following developments in Libya, now more than ever given that we are a member of the Security Council, because this is a brotherly country to whose problems we cannot be indifferent. We all are witness to the importance of the effects and consequences of the destabilization that has affected this previously stable country. Equatorial Guinea wishes to express here its full commitment to the peaceful stabilization of Libya and a return to peace and normality there.

In 2011, His Excellency the President of Equatorial Guinea, Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, Acting Chairman of the African Union, invited the international community and African Union partners to provide unreserved support to the parties to the conflict so that they could work together to put an end to hostilities, ensure the effective protection of the civilian population and create conditions favourable to a dialogue between the parties to the conflict, thus beginning the reforms necessary to address the causes of the current crisis. It is in this regard that our Head of State, in his statement before the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, said:

> "The use of force in a conflict is not a unifying factor but rather one of division" (*A/66/PV.11, p. 35*).

That is why Equatorial Guinea believes that in order to achieve the desired stability and peace in Libya, it is vital that the parties and the various stakeholders in the country commit to this process through transparent, frank and inclusive dialogue in good faith.

The Libyan Political Agreement of 2015 must serve as the basis for all efforts at reconciliation and should serve as a framework until the process has been concluded and has been determined to be sufficiently inclusive to accommodate the aspirations of the two assemblies and lead to an end to the political crisis in Libya. The Agreement must also make it possible to progress in legislation with respect to the process that should lead to transition.

The launching, on 20 September 2017, of the United Nations action plan for Libya aims to build upon and strengthen the Libyan Political Agreement in order to create the right conditions for the holding of free and fair elections. The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) has provided the necessary technical support to the High National Electoral Commission and is working assiduously to create the right political, legislative and security conditions for the holding of elections this year. The elections should enable the country to return to political, institutional, economic and social normalcy. In the same vein, UNSMIL is also involved in the preparations for the national conference that should bring all of Libya's people to the table to address, frankly and comprehensively, the myriad problems affecting the country.

We are pleased to note that the action plan has made some headway. The United Nations convened meetings at UNSMIL offices in Tunis of the joint drafting committee, composed of members from both the House of Representatives and the High State Council, to agree on a set of amendments to the Libyan Political Agreement, in additon to it's having indicated that this framework could end the crisis. As as result, the provisions of article 12 of the Political Agreement were implemented. The action plan also includes a commitment to assisting armed groups, by developing a strategy that would enable them to gradually reintegrate into society. The Libyan people are eager for peace and an end to seven years of uninterrupted conflict.

Equatorial Guinea believes that the assistance and efforts of the various international entities to bring about peace in Libya are indispensable, since the complex nature of the situation and the hostility of the parties to the conflict require external mediation, which, in this case is provided through the quartet partners — the African Union, the League of Arab States and the

European Union — and the role played by neighbouring countries, such as Egypt, Tunisia and Chad.

In spite of the considerable progress made in the country, major challenges remain, such as insecurity, impunity, the humanitarian situation and migration-related issues. The proliferation of armed groups operating outside the law leads to serious violations of human rights, whose perpetrators go unpunished. That situation results in flagrant cases of impunity and anarchy. The humanitarian crisis is also an important element of the crisis because the country is still far from achieving the levels of education, security and health care it enjoyed prior to the outbreak of the crisis in 2011. Groups, entities or individuals in today's Libyan society posing a threat to Libya's return to normalcy must be subject to exemplary sanctions.

Immigrants remain the main targets of such issues and become the victims of extreme violence, forced labour, trafficking, extortion, murder and other serious abuses and harassment, such as the odious trafficking in migrants, both inside and outside of official detention centres. We call upon the Government of Libya to address such challenges through a direct and comprehensive approach in order to find a definitive solution that respects both the rights of immigrants and those of the country's host communities.

Lastly, I would like to convey our firm support to the United Nations Support Mission in Libya for its laudable and tireless efforts to promote peace, security and stability in this brotherly country, despite challenges, sacrifice and loss in an environment that is at times exacting. We encourage UNSMIL to continue to support the Libyan authorities and institutions in their efforts to build peace in this brotherly country.

Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Let me thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Mr. Ghassan Salamé, for his briefing on the situation in Libya and to assure him that my country, Côte d'Ivoire, supports his efforts to bring about peace in Libya. I would also like to commend the staff of UNSMIL on their efforts in a very challenging environment. I would like to sincerely thank Ms. Sharief for her relevant briefing and ongoing commitment to ensuring that the voices of women and youth are heard in the democratic process in her country, Libya. Finally, I would like to commend the Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden, Ambassador Irina Schoulgin Nyoni, on her briefing on the twenty-seventh report of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya.

Today's meeting gives me an opportunity to talk about my country's concerns surrounding the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement and the humanitarian and security situation in the country. I welcome the international community's ongoing commitment to assisting the Libyan people in their quest for peace and stability, in particular since the signing of the Agreement in Skhirat, Morocco. In spite of its constraints, that important Agreement remains the reference framework that will lead the country to a democratic, credible and inclusive transition and a sustainable political solution. In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the most recent presidential statement of the Security Council (S/PRST/2017/26), dated 14 December 2017, with regard to the situation in Libya. The statement reiterated the continuity of the Political Agreement throughout the country's transition and enabled the Council to dispel all uncertainty surrounding the political process and to foster discussion among Libyan stakeholders.

Similarly, my delegation believes that the support of the Council for the sequencing of operations detailed in the action plan should enable the Government and the people of Libya to lay the foundation for a consensus-based constitutional reform, which is required for the successful holding of future elections. In that regard, the Ivoirian delegation welcomes the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to foster political dialogue among the Libyan parties and to encourage them to resolve, without delay and in the interests of the Libyan people, all outstanding issues, in particular the reconstitution of the Presidential Council and the establishment of a representative unity Government and a unified army. The political process in Libya is now at a decisive juncture. All actors involved in efforts to build peace in this brotherly country must therefore work together to reach a sustainable solution to the crisis. There is no other path to peace and security in Libya. Côte d'Ivoire therefore encourages Libya's neighbours, as well as France, the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations, to work together in order to bring peace to the Libyan people, which, now more than ever, is within reach.

My country welcomes and pays tribute to the efforts of the African Union and its commendable involvement in the search for peace in Libya since the

beginning of the conflict. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the adoption of the road map of the African Union on Libya and the tireless efforts of President Denis Sassou Nguesso, Chair of the High-level Committee of the African Union on Libya. Those efforts led to the holding of the meeting of Lybian tribal leaders in Brazzaville in November 2017 and to a meeting of the main protagonists of the crisis, both of which contributed to strengthening dialogue among all parties.

My country calls on Africa and Europe to work even more closely to support the Libyan people's determination to achieve peace. This important political progress must be taken into account so that the national conference planned for next February lives up to its purpose.

With regard to the humanitarian and security situation, my delegation remains concerned about the numerous human rights violations brought about in large part by the armed militias and terrorist groups, which are preventing the State from spreading its authority throughout the country and preventing it from maintaining order. The security situation in Libya is a real source of concern for the international community, which fears that the Islamic State and other terrorist groups could take root in the country, which has already seen a proliferation of armed militias. In parallel to the political process and in order to guarantee its success, we must also address the issue of armed militias and the consequences of the jihadists' withdrawal to Libya and foreign terrorist fighters who were defeated in Syria and Iraq. The presence of those fighters is a serious threat to stability and peace in Libya and they contribute to the destabilization of the Sahelo-Saharan region.

There is no alternative to strongly countering terrorists, human traffickers and smuggler networks if we want to sustainably build peace and put an end to the appalling practice of slavery, the selling of human beings and the inhumane treatment of refugees, which our countries have all condemned. In that regard, I call on the international community to sign the joint statement of the fifth Summit of the African Union and the European Union, which was held from 29 to 30 November 2017 in Abidjan, in order to put an end to this degrading situation and protect the life and dignity of migrants and refugees.

Before concluding, I would like to express my delegation's vigorous condemnation of the illicit export of crude oil, which Her Excellency Ms. Irina Schoulgin Nyoni just made us aware of in her briefing. This trade is a source of funding for armed groups, prolongs unnecessarily the suffering of the Libyan people and complicates the resolution of the conflict, which is tearing the country apart. The United Nations and the Security Council cannot run the risk of allowing that illicit trade to flourish. We must therefore take all the necessary measures to put an end to it.

My delegation would like to reiterate its congratulations to Mr. Salamé for the excellent work he is carrying out under difficult circumstances in order to fulfil his mandate. We call upon the international community to provide him, as well as Libyan institutions and in particular the High National Electoral Commission, all the support necessary to ensure the successful holding and outcome of the electoral process.

Ms. Schoulgin Nyoni (Sweden): I would like begin by to thanking Special Representative Salamé for his briefing to the Security Council today and for his valuable efforts. We strongly support his work and that of the United Nations in Libya. I would also like to welcome the inspiring briefing from Ms. Sharief. I thank her for bringing the essential voice of civil society, particularly that of Libyan women, to the Council. We commend the efforts she is undertaking in a truly challenging environment.

We have consistently advocated for the United Nations to play the leading role in the mediation efforts in Libya, and we are particularly encouraged by the recent visit of Under-Secretary-General Feltman. Continued high-level United Nations engagement in Libya is important for a reinvigorated, inclusive and long-term approach in support of the Libya-led political process.

Special Representative Salamé can be assured of our full support as he continues to implement the United Nations plan of action for Libya.We are encouraged by his flexible and pragmatic approach and we remain committed to the Libyan Political Agreement as the only viable framework for the transitional period. After years of conflict and violence, rebuilding trust between communities is an essential prerequisite for rebuilding the country. We welcome the bottom-up approach to promoting reconciliation and unity — at local as well as national levels. We agree with Mr. Salamé that this is also a crucial part of laying the foundation for elections.

We are encouraged by the progress made to date in the voter registration exercise, with almost 2 million voters now registered by the High National Electoral Commission. We urge all Libyan political leaders to engage constructively in the election preparations and to help create the necessary political, legal and security conditions for elections in 2018. All Libyans have the right to live in a democratic State that upholds the rule of law and respects human rights.

Ms. Sharief eloquently and forcefully communicated the indispensable role that women are already playing in building trust and reconciliation in Libya. Let me join her in reiterating the importance of women's fair representation and full participation in each step of the political process going forward. We welcome the participation of women in the drafting committee sessions in Tunis, and expect that upcoming gatherings, as well as the national conference, will be inclusive and will also provide opportunities for Libyan women's concerns to be addressed — for example, on issues of security and mobility. Such an inclusive peace process will open up opportunities for a more just peace, and is more likely to be perceived as representative and legitimate by the population at large. In Libya, we now need to seize the momentum and place women's full enjoyment of their rights at the core of international peace and security. This is not a women's issue, it is a peace and security issue.

We remain deeply concerned about the suffering of migrants and refugees in Libya. Every effort must be made to safeguard those who have fled human rights abuses and violations in their home countries in search of refuge or a better future. We reiterate our call for full and unhindered humanitarian access to detention centres and for further efforts to turn detention facilities into open transit centres that meet international standards. In addition, investigations into crimes committed, including the slave trade, as well as accountability for those responsible, is crucial. We remain open to exploring the possibility of using sanctions to target smuggling and trafficking in persons.

Finally, the assets of the Libyan people must be managed properly so in the future they can be used for the benefit of all Libyans. For that reason, we are concerned about the management of Libya's frozen assets and about indications of a depletion of those funds. In our national capacity, we are committed to working with the United Nations and partners to explore ways of improving the current situation.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to thank Mr. Ghassan Salamé, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, for his instructive briefing on the situation there, as well as the statements by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden, on behalf of the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, and by Ms. Hajer Sharief.

In that regard, we would like to emphasize the importance of advancing the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement and the United Nations action plan in order to facilitate and mediate the political process being conducted by the Libyan parties. The dialogue between the High State Council and the House of Representatives is a positive step, insofar as it expresses mutual recognition and interest in progressing towards a national transition based on implementation of the Political Agreement signed in 2015. We call on all domestic stakeholders to participate actively in that process, which, in the words of Mr. Salamé, is Libya's only path to stability and unity.

We welcome the initiative to convene a national conference under the auspices of the Secretary-General. It will be essential to establish a platform for coordination, commitment and cooperation between the various political actors and Libyan civil society. We would like to highlight the importance of involving all national actors committed to sustaining peace in the country, especially women and young people, as Ms. Sharief so eloquently emphasized. The national conference should be an inclusive space for dialogue and reconciliation, leading, as soon as possible, to transparent, credible general elections that are accepted by all parties. The endorsement and support of the international community will be essential to achieving that goal.

However, we are still concerned about the ongoing violence and acts of terror, such as the murder of the mayor of Misrata and the recent attack on Tripoli's airport. We are also worried about the serious and reprehensible violations of human rights reported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, including trafficking in persons and the situation of migrant groups. According to UNICEF reports, more than 36,000 migrant children in Libya require urgent humanitarian assistance in Libya. Libya's situation as an country of international transit demands the strengthening of appropriate measures for preventing

and addressing abuses and human rights violations. In that regard, we think it important to pursue initiatives aimed at establishing oversight and control mechanisms in the country.

In conclusion, we reiterate our support for Mr. Salamé's work, and we will continue to closely monitor the Libyan political process with a view to helping contributing to Libya's efforts to achieve in the near future the standards of good governance, sustainable development and guaranteed respect for and promotion of human rights that it deserves.

Mr. Safronkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Salamé for his briefing. We very much appreciate his professionalism and diligent efforts in the work of restoring the Libyan State. We support the steps taken by the United Nations to help to end the conflict in Libya on the basis of the Special Representative's action plan. In that regard, we are pleased to see the ongoing contacts between Libyan parties, including the representatives of Tripoli and Tobruk. We see progress in the discussion of issues related to amending the Libyan Political Agreement, which still represents the basis for a peaceful settlement. However, it is clear that this is only the first phase of the major job that lies ahead. We hope that the negotiations will continue and will start to resemble reliable agreements as soon as possible.

Once the amendments to the Skhirat agreement agreed on by the Libyans have been incorporated into it, its implementation should help to resolve the whole complex of urgent tasks on Libya's agenda, including restoring order on the security front, seriously combating terrorism, reviving the economic and social sectors, rectifying the humanitarian situation and addressing the escalating problem of illegal migration. At the same time, we believe that it will be crucial to have the international cooperation of the appropriate specialized bodies in order to counter the criminal business networks associated with human trafficking. That challenge cannot be left up to Libya alone.

We impatiently await the day when Libyans are launched on the road to sustainable development and can independently dispose of their country's rich resources, which no one else has the right to infringe on. We are concerned about the recent clashes around the Tripoli airport. Such events are not uncommon in Libya, unfortunately. Among other things, they are a sign of inadequate control over the situation and a reminder of how vital the task of establishing a unified system for the State administration and security apparatus is.

A broadly representative inter-Libyan dialogue is still the only effective way to deal with the protracted crisis and achieve national reconciliation. There should be no attempts to unfairly exclude patriotically minded political forces from discussing the parameters of national reconstruction. We hope that Libyans, with the support of the United Nations action plan, will be able to restore unity in their country, taking the interests of every region into account.

We have consistently emphasized the importance of consolidating international efforts to assist Libya. Each mediating mission should function on the basis of the same rules, aimed at uniting the country. We welcome constructive initiatives, undertaken in an understanding of the importance of strengthening the central coordinating role of the United Nations. We urge all the parties involved to give due and careful attention to the ideas proposed by the African Union. We must not forget that in 2011 a disregard for the regional dynamics expressed by that important continental organization resulted in the wasting of a genuine chance for a political settlement for Libya. Instead, in violation of a resolution of the Security Council, a military aggression was launched that led ultimately to the destruction of the Libyan State, which the United Nations is currently attempting to restore.

On behalf of the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) concerning Libya, Ms. Schoulgin Nyoni informed us about that sanctions entity's work in the past few months. We appreciate the Swedish delegation's efforts, led by Ambassador Skoog. The problem of the illicit proliferation of arms in Libya remains acute, affecting security in the country itself and in the Sahara-Sahel region and demanding the most stringent possible control over shipments of military equipment to Libya conducted under the current exemptions.

Russia cares deeply about the restoration of peace and stability in Libya, which we envisage as a united, independent State, playing a significant role in international and regional policy. We are ready to cooperate further in promoting the political process in Libya, and to assist Mr. Salamé by supporting trustworthy contacts with all Libyan stakeholders. That is our principal doctrine.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China thanks Special Representative Salamé and Ambassador Schoulgin Nyoni for their briefings. China also listened attentively to the statement made by Ms. Sharief.

At present, Libyans are striving to restore peace and stability. However, the country still faces multiple challenges, including difficulties in their political process, a fragile security environment and rampant terrorist activity, as well as the large-scale movements of refugees and migrants. All Libyan parties should place the overall interests of the country and the vital interests of its people above all else and jointly take active measures to promote the peace process. The international community should continue to provide concrete support to that end.

First, all actors should remain committed to the overarching objective of seeking a political settlement to Libyan issue. The future of Libya should be determined by the Libyan people themselves. The international community should respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Libya, and continue to promote a Libyan-led and -owned political process. All Libyan parties should resolve their differences through inclusive dialogue and find a solution that accommodates all interests through political means. The Libyan Political Agreement is a fundamental framework for ending the Libyan crisis and contributes to national reconciliation and the restoration of national governance.

Secondly, the international community must create favourable security conditions for Libyan political dialogue. China supports Libya's efforts towards safeguarding national security and stability. We hope that all actors in Libya will bolster dialogue, continuously build mutual trust, work towards building unified national armed forces and take united and concerted counter-terrorism action so as to effectively reduce the threat of terrorism.

Thirdly, the United Nations role as the main channel of mediations should be preserved. Special Representative Salamé has led the phased return of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya to Libya. In line with the United Nations action plan of promoting the Libyan political process, he has facilitated extensive dialogue among all Libyan stakeholders, conducted in-depth discussions on such issue as drafting a constitution and made headway in the electoral process. Some progress has been achieved. The international community must enhance its confidence, maintain its patience and continue to support Special Representative Salamé's efforts to press ahead with the action plan prudently.

We hope that Libya's neighbouring countries, the African Union, the League of Arab States and the European Union will increase their support to the Libyan political process. China will continue to follow developments closely and support all efforts to stabilize the situation on the ground, promote the political process for settling the Libyan question and help all parties to unite in combating terrorism. China stands ready to enhance its contribution to the early restoration of peace, stability and prosperity in Libya.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Kazakhstan.

We thank Special Representative Salamé, Ambassador Irina Schoulgin Nyoni and Ms. Sharief for their comprehensive briefings. We fully support the view that the solution to the situation in Libya must be primarily and solely peaceful and that the ownership of the political process must belong to the Libyans themselves.

The Libyan Political Agreement should remain the only viable framework throughout the transitional period. The adoption of the new Libyan constitution, the adoption of the electoral law by the House of Representatives and the holding of national elections will facilitate overcoming political division and help to bring about permanent stability.

International efforts to advance political reconciliation in Libya should be consolidated under the leadership of the United Nations-led action plan. It is important that the Security Council maintain unity and support the work of Special Representative Salamé.

At the same time, we must attach great importance to the development agenda, and it is vital that Libya's oil resources be used for the benefit of the Libyan people.

Issues of impunity and violations of human rights, the grave humanitarian plight and the dire situation of migrants should be addressed urgently.

Strict compliance with the embargo on the supply of arms to Libya must be enforced.

Finally, Kazakhstan stands ready to support the Council's endeavour to bring about lasting peace and prosperity in Libya.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Mr. Elmajerbi (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a pleasure for me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to thank Mr. Ghassan Salamé, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, for his important briefing, wherein he underscored the intensive efforts being undertaken to engage in dialogue with all Libyan stakeholders so as to bring together the viewpoints of the political parties. We wish him every success in this undertaking.

We would also like to thank Ms. Irina Schoulgin Nyoni, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden, for her briefing, which covered recent developments with regard to the sanctions imposed against Libya. I also thank Ms. Sharief, who spoke about Libyan civil society, especially with regard to the situation of women and young people. I reiterate the commitment of the Government of National Accord to support the road map, to resolve the Libyan crisis and to achieve security and stability in Libya.

Last December marked the second anniversary of the Libyan Political Agreement, which remains the sole framework for the political process in Libya, as reaffirmed by the international community in its statements and resolutions — the most recent of which was adopted in 2017 (S/PRST/2017/26). Despite the lack of means, the challenges of recent years have led us to work tirelessly to surmount the obstacles that have emerged at all levels, which continue to weigh heavily on the daily lives of the Libyan people.

Members should be aware that positive developments have taken place, specifically at the security level in combating terrorism, as well as the with regard to Government oversight of State institutions. However, a number of commitments have not been met due to political divisions and the existence of parallel institutions, despite the fact that the international community has confirmed their illegal nature and called for such entities to not be cooperated with. Certain States nevertheless continue to cooperate with the parallel governments — contrary to the Council's relevant international and regional resolutions. We once again call upon all Libyan stakeholders to allow national interests to prevail over narrow ones, to put an end to the deteriorating situation in the country and to work together to build a strong, robust, civil and democratic State.

Events in Libya in recent have showed that there is no military solution to the Libyan crisis. The only solution is a comprehensive, consensus-based political solution that brings together all stakeholders participating in political dialogue, without any exception.

With regard to the United Nations road map, we highlight the forthcoming general elections in Libya — an initiative broadly supported by the Libyan people. The number of voting registrations has increased in various regions in Libya. Most political leaders have voiced their support for that increase, and the Government of National Accord has lent its support for the High National Electoral Commission to facilitate the electoral process.

Against that backdrop, all positive indicators are rekindling hope for the success of the process. We call upon the Libyan Parliament to expedite the adoption of an electoral law. We will have to take into account numerous challenges, including encouraging the Libyan people to participate in the elections, ensure that all parties accept the the outcome and guarantee a safe and conducive environment for the holding of the elections, to take place under robust United Nations oversight and with the participation of regional organizations. That will ensure the integrity of the elections and prevent any flaws that could lead to future disputes. With respect to the participation of civil society, women and young people in the political process, and finding solutions for the issues plaguing the Libyan people, our Government is working with civil society through Libyan non-governmental organizations in all regions of Libya to establish dialogue and address the many concerns of the Libyan people.

I turn now to the cargo vessel *Andromeda*, which was seized by the Greek Coast Guard en route from Turkey to the city of Misrata in Libya. According to the Greek authorities, it contained tons of dangerous materials used to manufacture explosives. The Government of National Accord reiterates its condemnation of all acts that threaten the security of the State and its citizens, and reaffirms its commitment to international resolutions related to the arms embargo imposed against Libya. It hopes that the Greek and Turkish Governments will convey to it the results of their investigations into these matters, and calls upon the

Panel of Experts of the committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) to launch investigations in order to shed light on the circumstances. The Government of National Accord reiterates its rejection and condemnation of all violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and the assassinations that take place in Libya, regardless of the perpetrators. It reaffirms that it stands strongly against whoever tries to destabilize the security and stability situation and endanger the lives of civilians in Libya.

The Government of National Accord condemns all violations targeting refugees crossing Libyan territory in an illegal manner. It is monitoring the conditions endured by illegal migrants in detention centres so as to ensure that they are provided with adequate services in secure and safe conditions, in order to establish conditions conducive to their repatriation in cooperation with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and the International Organization for Migration.

With respect to allegations of human trafficking, our Government rejects such criminal acts, be they in Libya or elsewhere in the world. Such acts are against the traditions of the Libyan people, the values of the Muslim religion, applicable Libyan law and international laws and norms. The Prosecutor-General of Libya has launched an investigation into these allegations so as to ensure accountability where proof is provided. We welcome the participation of States and international and regional organizations seeking to assist the investigation into these allegations. In that regard, we commend the efforts of the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union and neighbouring States to resolve the question of illegal refugees in Libya and to ensure their repatriation.

We reiterate our call on the Security Council to find adequate means to protect frozen Libyan assets through the better management of said assets and to assist the Government in stanching the losses accruing from their status. Such losses are considerable because the Libyan State is prohibited from managing them appropriately. Foreign banks are imposing negative, high-interest rates on Libya's frozen assets, which has eroded our capital and assets alike. This grave situation — as we have repeatedly said — has entailed losses and waste in Libya's frozen funds, which are intended for the Libyan people and future generations.

Pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), it is important that these assets be protected and not used in any way against the interests of the Libyan State. However, the present situation runs counter to that aim and is leading to the loss of assets. We have asked not for the freeze to be lifted, but for a solution to be found that would manage and protect the funds and investments while keeping them frozen.

In conclusion, the Libyan people have been badly affected by the deterioration of their living standards at all levels, particularly at the economic level, due to political divisions. We hope that the international community will assist the Libyan people in restoring stability and building a democratic State. Once again, I wish Mr. Salamé every success in his mission. We are confident that his efforts will lead to better results.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.8160

Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8160th meeting

Thursday, 18 January 2018, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	President Nazarbayev/Mr. Abdrakhmanov	(Kazakhstan)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Kuwait	Mr. Al Sabah
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	President Duda
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Field
	United States of America	Mrs. Haley

Agenda

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

Confidence-building measures

Letter dated 2 January 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2018/4)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

Confidence-building measures

Letter dated 2 January 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2018/4)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I wish to warmly welcome His Excellency President Andrzej Duda of the Republic of Poland, the Secretary-General, Ministers and other distinguished representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence here today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion. I should also like to take this opportunity to congratulate President Duda on the start of Poland's non-permanent membership of the Security Council. I look forward to fruitful cooperation with his delegation. I also congratulate the delegations of Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Kuwait, the Netherlands and Peru on their accession to the Council this year as non-permanent members. I very much hope that we will work together productively in this critical organ of the United Nations.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/4, which contains the text of a letter dated 2 January 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

The Secretary-General: I am pleased to join the members of the Security Council for this timely debate, and I thank the Republic of Kazakhstan for convening it. Kazakhstan has a proud tradition of support for a world free of weapons of mass destruction and for the global non-proliferation regime. I thank President Nursultan Nazarbayev for his personal leadership on this vital issue. Kazakhstan's contributions include rejecting the possession of nuclear weapons and founding the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

The Council, too, is instrumental in preventing the spread and use of weapons of mass destruction. As the Council declared in 1992 at its first Head of State-level summit on the issue (see S/PV.3046), the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security. Confidence-building measures such as resolutions 255 (1968) and 984 (1995), on negative security assurances, helped pave the way, respectively, to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to its indefinite extension. However, despite the Council's efforts, the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction remains — and, indeed, seems to be gathering force.

Global anxieties about nuclear weapons are at the highest level since the Cold War. The situation on the Korean peninsula is the most tense and dangerous peace-and-security challenge in the world today. I remain deeply concerned about the growing risk of military confrontation and the unimaginable consequences that would result. I welcome the firm decisions that the Security Council has taken in response to nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in defiance of Security Council resolutions. They must be fully implemented.

The Council's unity also creates an opportunity for diplomatic engagement. As I said to the General Assembly this week, I welcome the reopening of inter-Korean communication channels, especially military-to-military. That is critical to lower the risk of miscalculation or misunderstanding and to reduce tensions. I am also encouraged by the decision of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to participate in the upcoming Winter Olympics in the Republic of Korea. We need to build upon those small signs of hope and expand diplomatic efforts to achieve the peaceful denuclearization of the Korean peninsula in the context of regional security.

Elsewhere, trust on nuclear and other issues between the United States and the Russian Federation continues to ebb. Vital strategic arms-reduction measures established during and after the Cold War are under threat. There seems to be no appetite to negotiate new nuclear arms arsenal-reduction treaties after the expiration of the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, in 2021. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, on the

Iranian nuclear programme, is also being questioned. That multilateral agreement, which is in the interests of the Iranian people and of the international community at large, should be preserved.

In the Syrian conflict, the use of chemical weapons seriously challenges the global taboo against those weapons of mass destruction. If the use of chemical weapons in Syria is once again determined to have taken place, the international community will need to find an appropriate way to identify those responsible and hold them to account. Without such an avenue, we would be allowing the use of chemical weapons to take place with impunity. I hope the Council can return to unity on that issue.

The threats posed by weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery are taking place in an environment of increasing military budgets and the over-accumulation of weapons — and they are coupled with a serious growth in regional tensions. In such a geopolitical context, confidence-building measures that support arms control, non-proliferation and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction are extremely important. By increasing understanding of others' positions and allowing information-sharing on, for example, military budgets, strategic outlooks and troop movements, they can help to decrease tension and avert conflict

In the case of the Biological Weapons Convention, which does not have a formal verification mechanism, a system of confidence-building measures has contributed to enhancing transparency. Those measures are intended to "prevent or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions" through the provision of annual information on national biodefence programmes, high-containment laboratories, legislative frameworks, and vaccine production. Unfortunately, participation has been less than satisfactory, with fewer than half of all States parties regularly providing information. For the measures to be truly effective, States must take full advantage of their benefits.

Trust is essential, but confidence can be undermined by bellicose rhetoric, confrontational approaches, the absence of communication channels, and inflexible positions. Engaging in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms-control measures are in and of themselves confidence-building. By removing the threat posed by weapons, arms-control and non-proliferation mechanisms provide the breathing space for dialogue, boost confidence in parties' intentions and lay the groundwork for building the trust necessary to end conflicts.

Nowhere was that more apparent than in the ground-breaking arms-control agreements of the late 1980s and early 1990s that contributed to the peaceful end to the Cold War. It is therefore alarming to see historic accords such as the Treaty on Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces and the Open Skies Treaty under question. Effective verification mechanisms have proved to be some of the most successful and enduring types of confidence-building measures. From the ground-breaking verification protocols of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty to the invaluable work undertaken by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, verification builds confidence. In that context, I welcome the establishment of a group of governmental experts on nuclear disarmament verification.

Effective verification requires support for the entities tasked with monitoring and verification, in order to ensure that they can fulfil their duties in an impartial and professional manner. It also requires understanding that non-proliferation challenges are not static. The measures we use to overcome them need to evolve in tandem with the implementation of disarmament commitments.

I believe that the United Nations can play a central role in assisting Member States in developing, augmenting and supporting confidence-building measures. The United Nations position as an honest broker allows us to act as a venue in which all parties can engage in dialogue, whether for the development of new norms and values or to resolve existing disputes and promote understanding.

Going forward, the Security Council in particular can provide leadership by demonstrating unity and continuing to highlight the importance of dialogue and diplomacy as an essential means for building confidence. A measure that all Member States can undertake is the universal and complete implementation of all disarmament and non-proliferation obligations. I appreciate the fact that, due to resource and other constraints, the implementation of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation commitments can prove difficult for some Member States. I therefore call on all States able to do so to provide the necessary capacity-building assistance.

The development of practical confidence-building measures is an important means of achieving the United Nations mandate to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. However, they are not an end in themselves. Preventing, mitigating and resolving conflict requires comprehensive political solutions that include dialogue and negotiation and, in cases involving weapons of mass destruction, verifiable disarmament and non-proliferation. I believe that the current international situation underscores the need to reframe and modernize long-standing disarmament and non-proliferation priorities. Deepening divisions and persistent stagnation in this field are exacerbating international tensions and creating new dangers.

As a contribution to reversing these trends, I intend to explore opportunities to generate new direction and impetus for the global disarmament agenda. I look forward to engaging with stakeholders on these issues in the months ahead.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and for his robust support for the agenda of today's meeting.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as President of Kazakhstan.

(*spoke in Kazakh; English interpretation provided by the delegation*)

I am glad to welcome everyone to this thematic briefing. We consider Kazakhstan's election as a non-permanent member and accession to the presidency of the Security Council to be signs of the international community's trust in our country and our peaceful policy, in particular members that have supported our position. As the first State of Central Asia to undertake this noble mission, we have become the voice of the countries of our region in this important organ of the global Organization.

A year has passed since Kazakhstan started its term in the Security Council. We have strived to be proactive, constructive and objective in addressing the pressing issues on the Council's agenda. While chairing the committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015), concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities; and the committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009), concerning Somalia and Eritrea, we have made our contribution to their productive proceedings. I am grateful to all Council members for their continued cooperation.

(*spoke in Russian*)

Today's meeting is the flagship event of Kazakhstan's presidency of the Security Council, and is specifically dedicated to one of the most pressing topics on the contemporary global agenda. Confidence-building measures aimed at achieving the goals of peace and security play a key role in conflict prevention and the resolution of pressing global issues. At the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, I proposed the establishment of a regional structure for security and confidence-building measures in Asia. That mechanism was created as a result of thorough diplomatic action. The Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia is now successfully functioning, bringing together 26 States of the region.

A quarter of a century later, I again address the United Nations on behalf of Kazakhstan, now a non-permanent member of the Security Council. However, I cannot help but say that question of increasing mutual confidence among some countries and at the global level remains urgent and is becoming ever more relevant. Confidence-building measures should remain on the agenda as the most important element in the maintenance of the global security architecture and the strengthening of peace at the global level. Why is that so?

First, confidence-building measures justified themselves in the process of preventing the threat of total destruction in the second half of the twentieth century, when humankind stood at the brink of a large-scale war. The Charter of the United Nations states that our main goal is to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Over a quarter of a century in the United Nations system, my country has made a sweeping transition from being an owner of the world's fourth-largest nuclear arsenal to being a leader of global non-proliferation, having closed the largest nuclear test site, Semipalatinsk. The renunciation of nuclear weapons and the status of a nuclear Power was our deliberate and sincere choice — a voluntary initiative supported by all the people of Kazakhstan and duly appreciated by the international community. Today our country is a party to all fundamental international treaties in the area of nuclear security and has legally enshrined its nuclear-free status.

Secondly, the atmosphere of mutual trust may facilitate the creation of a new model of international cooperation. A shining example and a practical embodiment of such cooperation was the opening last year of the International Atomic Energy Agency Low-Enriched Uranium Bank. With this, Kazakhstan has made yet another contribution to strengthening the non-proliferation regime and the safe use of uranium for peace purposes.

Thirdly, Kazakhstan's nuclear-free status may serve as an example and practical guidance to other countries. I say this on the basis of our own experience. We have built and strengthened our independent country and secured its high international standing specifically by renouncing nuclear weapons and obtaining non-aggression safeguards from nuclear Powers. We call on all other States to follow our example. We have called on Iran to do so, and now call on North Korea to follow suit. The way to counter the threat of nuclear weapons throughout the world is through trust.

Fourthly, the contemporary potential of progress in science and technology and the realities of globalization make the task of ensuring the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) a matter of humankind's survival. The increase in the number of countries possessing WMDs poses the risk of nuclear, chemical, biological and radiological weapons falling into the hands of destructive forces. The current legal framework for nuclear security failed to prevent the expansion of the nuclear Powers club in the late twentieth century. I believe that the much-needed strengthening of the non-proliferation regime, based on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), will require deep shifts in thinking and new multilateral political solutions. I suggest the following measures to build confidence in the field of non-proliferation.

First, I believe that we should make withdrawal from the NPT more difficult. The example of North Korea may prompt similar action on the part of other countries with ambitions to possess nuclear weapons. Without casting doubt on the NPT, I propose that we consider the possibility of crafting a special Security Council draft resolution that clearly spells out the consequences for those countries that violate the Treaty, including sanctions measures and other coercive measures. We have seen the necessity of that. The NPT did not stop certain countries, such as India and Pakistan, in their aspiration to possess nuclear weapons.

Secondly, we must develop a truly effective mechanism for implementing tough measures to prevent the acquisition and proliferation of WMDs. Such multilateral agreements should be adopted through separate Security Council resolutions. As a primary measure to eliminate incentives to possess WMDs, I believe that it its necessary to develop a legally binding system of safeguards by nuclear Powers for those States that would voluntarily abandon possessing nuclear weapons, as well as non-nuclear-weapon States. That is fair and can be accomplished without great effort.

Thirdly, the success or failure of the process of modernizing the global security system directly depends on the international community's ability to overcome outdated militaristic mindsets. We should relegate to the past dividing countries into military blocs or alliances, a concept that has become both provocative and meaningless in the twenty-first century. In that specific regard, we require mutual trust among States, which is waning with every passing year. I have set out my vision for global anti-military measures in my "Manifesto: the world, the twenty-first century", which proposes initiatives facilitating the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free world by the United Nations centenary. If that goal enjoys the support of the international community, I believe that it will be attainable.

Fourthly, we must revive political trust and systematic dialogue. A good illustration of that can be seen in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — the agreement concerning Iran's nuclear programme — which has demonstrated the success attainable through multilateral diplomacy in the area of non-proliferation. That has become a practical example of resolving the most complicated issues through negotiations. That agreement was made possible thanks to an atmosphere of building trust to which Kazakhstan contributed by example, and showed what we have achieved, while earning the trust of the international community. I hope for the continued and successful implementation of the JCPOA despite recent complications vis-à-vis some parties to the agreement's failure to fulfil their obligations.

As the Council is aware, two days ago I met with the President of the United States, Mr. Trump. We discussed that issue, and I have an impression that, in principle, we can resolve it. In our view, a similar constructive approach could be used to settle the nuclear issue involving North Korea. As we all know, current

developments on the Korean peninsula are illustrative of profound contradictions. The world is deeply concerned. That problem can be resolved by restoring trust among the United States, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China, which we also recently discussed at the White House. In that regard our positions converged. Without the participation of the United States, Russia and China, it would be difficult for us to resolve that issue. Accordingly, we call on stakeholders to reach a solution to the North Korean issue as expeditiously and constructively as possible. We advocate that the five nuclear-weapon States grant security assurances to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a key prerequisite for establishing an atmosphere of trust for Pyongyang to return to the negotiating table. Kazakhstan stands ready to engage in mediation and provide a platform for negotiations should the need arise among stakeholders.

Confidence-building measures are more relevant than ever for the Middle East, where tragic events are currently unfolding. The conflict in Syria is having negative repercussions extending far beyond the region. In that regard, it is important to note that mutual trust became the basis for the Astana talks, which, in so much as is possible, is contributing to the Syrian peace settlement process, while reinforcing the Geneva talks. Seven such meetings were held in Astana, and, as participants stated, those were all successful and helped to address issues.

Fifthly, in our view, one of the most effective measures in combating the proliferation of WMDs involves the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. That also constitutes the materialization of a form of collective trust. That was accomplished in Central Asia, and I hope that the nuclear Powers will recognize that step and ensure our protection. It is important to pursue efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. I call on stakeholders to resume their work, and hope that persistent disagreements remaining among certain countries will soon be overcome

Sixthly, there is now the risk of a new arms race involving scientific achievements. In that regard, the international community should strengthen control over the creation and proliferation of new military and information technologies. I believe that confidence-building measures are also necessary for forging common approaches aimed at preventing the militarization of outer space.

I believe that all the issues that I have just mentioned merit a stand-alone meeting of the United Nations to discuss everything that they entail, achieve a convergence of views among States and restore trust among them.

Today's realities are such that many conflicts can be prevented and effectively settled provided that there be mutual understanding and trust among the world's nuclear Powers. They bear the greatest responsibility before humankind to prevent a nuclear catastrophe. The largest nuclear Powers should constitute the vanguard in the struggle for a nuclear-weapon-free world and lead by an example in WMD reduction. That, however, does not mean that other countries should stand aside as if little depended upon them. On the other hand, if the great nuclear Powers state that they intend to maintain and strengthen their nuclear capacities and prevent others from acquiring the same, I believe that that will backfire. We must therefore work together.

The international community is strengthened by its diversity and pluralism, and can survive and flourish when there is balance and harmony among the nations and peoples living on our planet. For that very reason, we must strive together to achieve a safer world and a more equitable world order based upon the rule of international law. Undoubtedly, in that regard a special role and historic mission falls to the Security Council. I am convinced that in the twenty-first century humankind will be able to forge a dignified way towards a world free from the threat posed by WMDs. I believe that the trust, will power and intelligence of the international community amplified by the energy of collective action will prevent our planet from plunging into the abyss of a global catastrophe.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now call on the President of Poland.

President Duda: Let me start by thanking the Kazakh presidency for organizing this high-level debate on such an important and relevant topic. It shows Kazakhstan's long-lasting commitment to non-proliferation efforts. Kazakhstan's credibility in that matter is reinforced by the fact that it is one of a very few countries that has abandoned the nuclear path. I remember reading remarks by President Nazarbayev in which he stressed "that was the best decision I have ever made for my young country". And Kazakhstan's continued engagement in that regard

has been demonstrated many times ever since. Let me mention just the recent establishment of the Low Enriched Uranium Bank, which not only constitutes a major step towards promoting nuclear safety but also promotes transparency and builds confidence among peace-loving nations.

I also want to thank President Nazarbayev personally for inviting me to this debate. This is my first time, and most definitely not my last, visit to the Security Council as President of the Republic of Poland. I am here because the issue under consideration is very much connected to Poland's priorities in the Council, that is, supporting the existing and building new international law instruments to mitigate the unlawful and aggressive behaviour of some members of the international community. Let me stress that not only aggression, but also any attempt to build aggressive capabilities, should always be treated as a violation of international norms because, in the end, it leads to the erosion of the noble idea of the peaceful coexistence among States.

Peaceful cooperation among all States is the very essence of solidarity and lawfulness at the international level. That is why it is so important to further develop legal instruments in international relations, as well as the ability to enforce them. It also applies to the issue of nuclear non-proliferation. As members of the Security Council, we are committed to treating it with all the seriousness it deserves.

Despite having a developed and established legal and treaty architecture, non-proliferation and disarmament remain an unfinished project. At its core, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) can be seen as having a mixed record. I see three problems in that regard. First, there is no requirement for a country to join the Treaty, and those that do join have a potentially easy way out — they can withdraw from it with no more than three months' notice. Secondly, there is no framework under the Treaty for a sanctions regime to guard against Treaty violations. And, thirdly, although the Treaty allows for its signatories to pursue a nuclear strategy for peaceful purposes, the inspections procedure is based on voluntary cooperation and mutual trust. But, as we have seen throughout history, the world is not run by the gentlemen's agreement rule. In fact, world affairs are too often run by people who are anything but gentlemen.

Recent developments in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, broken assurances provided for Ukraine by the Budapest Memorandum, controversies over the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran, as well as threats posed by non-State actors, have all shown that the non-proliferation agenda is even more topical than ever today. And it does not apply only to military nuclear capabilities; chemical and biological weapons and ballistic missile proliferation2 are just as important.

With regard to chemical weapons, Poland finds it unacceptable that we are still confronted with the continued use of that type of arms. It is the responsibility of the Security Council to continue conveying a strong message to the world on that matter. Chemical weapons were used on a number of occasions since the 1960s by Egypt in Yemen, in the 1980s by Iraq against Iran and recently in Syria, but with no serious consequences for the side that used them — which is the problem.

Currently, however, the most worrisome situation seems to be the one on the Korean peninsula, where provocative actions taken by the North Korean regime not only destabilize the whole region but also undermine the entire non-proliferation effort. The stockpiling of chemical weapons, the development of military nuclear capabilities and ballistic missile programmes and provocative tests of those weapons are clear violations of international law in general, and of the respective Security Council resolutions in particular. Such actions show that the policy of aggression and confrontation overshadows the policy of open dialogue and trust. What is worse, they also show — creating a dangerous precedent — that running a policy based on the law of force, and not the force of law, sadly can be effective and can go unpunished.

The way in which we solve the crisis will have a significant impact on the future of the entire global non-proliferation architecture. I believe that the intensified efforts undertaken together by the international community will bring about a political solution and will result in the stabilization of the situation in the region. That is especially crucial today, as the 2018 Winter Olympics will soon begin in South Korea. That event should be celebrated in safe surroundings and allow for spectacular sport competition in an atmosphere of peace and friendship among all nations.

Poland has been a longstanding and active supporter of strengthening non-proliferation and disarmament norms and principles. We currently chair two important initiatives, namely, the second Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, the latter which we inherited from Kazakhstan in 2017.

Despite the concerns raised over the NPT, we believe it is the only real instrument that brings us closer to a world without nuclear weapons. The implementation of the Treaty is subject to review every five years. As its current guardian, Poland has the intention of focusing on maintaining its credibility as well as creating the environment for a mutually respectful, transparent and all-inclusive dialogue. Bearing in mind that the 2020 Review Conference will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT, we would very much appreciate the support of the Security Council and of the United Nations in efforts to make it our common success.

Equally significant to global and regional security and stability is the proliferation of ballistic missiles, including those capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction. Unfortunately, the record of efforts aimed at curbing it is short. That is why the importance of control mechanisms has become even greater.

For 15 years since its establishment, The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation has been promoting transparency and confidence-building measures. As its Chair, Poland wishes to follow up by supporting the full implementation of the Code and strengthening its relationship with the United Nations, as reflected in General Assembly resolution 59/91, of 3 December 2004.

In closing, I would like to again express my gratitude to the Kazakh presidency for selecting such an important issue as the focus of today's debate. Poland will continue its commitment to making our world safe from nuclear threats. As we are all aware, the devastating aftermath of the use of weapons of mass destruction would transgress all borders. That is why we should work closely within the United Nations community to make sure that it never happens.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait.

Mr. Al Sabah (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the Government and the people of the State of Kuwait, I should like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, and the friendly Republic of Kazakhstan on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. The choice of the topic for our debate today at the first high-level briefing of 2018 under the agenda item "Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction: confidence-building measures" is extremely important to the international community and to members of the Security Council, which seek to safeguard the world from weapons of mass destruction in the interest of maintaining stability, peace and security in the region and the world. We affirm the full support of the State of Kuwait in carrying out your responsibilities and in fulfilling your mandate.

I would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his valuable briefing, which illustrates the need to promote confidence-building measures in the context of preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in order to put an end to the threat that they represent. Disarmament and non-proliferation efforts are key to maintaining international peace and security.

The State of Kuwait attaches particular importance to all issues relating to disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which constitute the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). I would like to reiterate the steadfast position of the State of Kuwait with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security and to disarmament issues, in particular its commitment to the NPT and the outcomes of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the NPT, in line with its absolute commitment to respecting international treaties and our belief in their usefulness. We also confirm that the best way to eliminate the danger and threat of nuclear weapons and to ensure their non-proliferation is the complete and holistic elimination of nuclear weapons as soon as possible. We call on nuclear-weapon States to eliminate such weapons, to meet their commitments under article VI of the NPT and to lead the efforts for the universal commitment to the Treaty, which remains the very cornerstone of the international security, and the basis of the current disarmament and non-proliferation structure.

In considering international initiatives and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, we must remember the challenges facing the Middle East region

with regard to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Unfortunately, the Middle East remains a flagrant example of the threat to the non-proliferation regime and to the selectivity of the Security Council in dealing with such threats. It is therefore no surprise that the region, and the Arab countries in particular, are experiencing an unprecedented level of frustration because of the ongoing failure to implement the agreed commitment to establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

That is highlighted in the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT and in the action plan adopted by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. Those documents remain relevant until the objectives are achieved. It is the responsibility of all parties to the Treaty to implement the resolution, in particular the nuclear-weapon States and the three States that deposited the Treaty and submitted the resolution on the Middle East in the context of the indefinite extension of the Treaty.

Our debate today reaffirms the seriousness with which the Security Council deals with the threat of weapons of mass destruction, which is not limited to the declaration of preventive measures under resolution 1540 (2004) but also addresses future threats if such measures fail. Any use or threat of use of those deadly weapons will have consequences and will cause untold destruction. The Security Council therefore unanimously adopted resolution 2325 (2016), which reaffirms that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons constitutes a threat to international peace and security, and sets out a road map for the future work of States and the Committee pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) until 2021. We hope that that committee of the Security Council will become a standing committee, and not a temporary one, given its importance in preventing terrorists from acquiring nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

Moreover, we once again condemn the use of chemical weapons in Syria, as affirmed by international reports. We are following with concern the ongoing allegations of the use of those internationally prohibited weapons by the warring parties. The inability of the Security Council to uphold the international mechanism to determine which party has used such weapons means that the perpetrators of such crimes will enjoy impunity. We must find alternative solutions and a new mechanism that enjoys the consensus of all Security Council members to ensure that such criminals are brought to justice and held responsible. We also support the work done by the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, through its fact-finding mission, to investigate the allegations of the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

Finally, I reiterate the steadfast, principled position of the State of Kuwait with regard to non-proliferation issues and its ongoing commitment to cooperating in order to achieve our people's aspiration to a world free of weapons of mass destruction. We look forward to the day when, together, we will once and for all get rid of these weapons. Nuclear accidents do not recognize national borders. They affect all parts of the world. Our world no longer needs any proof of that. We call on all States that bear special responsibility to maintain international peace and security and all nations that constantly state their commitment to respecting the Charter of the United Nations to take clear and honest measures in order to achieve the goal of establishing a world free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation welcomes the initiative of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, to hold a special meeting of the Security Council on "Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction: confidence-building measures". This is especially relevant given that on 1 July this year we will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which undergirds the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. We believe firmly that the risks and threats we are encountering in this area today should be dealt with specifically on the basis of the Treaty, with a balanced approach to its three pillars — non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear power.

Unfortunately, we are approaching that half-century milestone weighed down by contradictions that could complicate the current NPT review cycle, which will conclude with the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 2020. Its main goals include confirmation of our commitment to the goals of the Treaty and our obligations under it, as well as its strengthening on the

basis of the Action Plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference. To that end, all countries must renounce the unwillingness to listen to one another that was so evident at the 2015 Review Conference — in particular in the misguided and dangerous trend prevailing at the time involving attempts to compel nuclear Powers to abandon their nuclear arsenals without accounting for their security interests or strategic realities.

That approach resulted in forced efforts to draft the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that is now open for signature. Russia does not intend to join the Treaty. We believe that the total eradication of nuclear weapons is possible only in a context of comprehensive, full disarmament, with equitable, equal and indivisible security for all, including those possessing nuclear weapons, as is provided for in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The provisions of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as presented for signature, are far from being based on those principles. It ignores the importance of taking into account every factor affecting our strategic stability today. It has given rise to profound disagreement among members of the international community and could have a destabilizing effect on the non-proliferation regime. I would like to stress that we embrace the goal of building a nuclear-weapon-free world. However, we cannot achieve that with the unilateral measures on which the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is based.

The prospects for the current review cycle also cast doubt on the lack of clarity regarding the creation of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. We believe that the conference convened to create such a zone remains relevant. For our part, we will continue to work to make progress in this process. We see a promise of success through consideration of the issue within the broader context of regional security. Russia's specific views in that regard are well known to all stakeholders and remain in force.

The status of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is another important issue. As a principal supporter of the Treaty, we call on all the countries on which its entry into force depends to sign and ratify it, as some of them have frequently promised to do. At the same time, it is still important to ensure the continuation of a moratorium on any nuclear explosions.

One of the crucial concrete steps aimed at maintaining the nuclear non-proliferation regime in its current phase is that of combining our efforts to sustainably implement the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) so as to resolve the issue of the Iranian nuclear programme. The Security Council supported the JCPOA through its unanimous adoption of resolution 2231 (2015) and therefore bears some responsibility for its implementation. Iran has complied strictly with its obligations, as the International Atomic Energy Agency has regularly confirmed. An overwhelming majority of the international community recognizes that the JCPOA is making a tangible contribution to strengthening the non-proliferation regime and maintaining international peace and security. We cannot repudiate this genuine achievement of multilateral diplomacy — the result of the efforts not only of the participants in the agreement itself but also of other stakeholders that supported the initiative, including Kazakhstan — for the benefit of certain countries' political agendas.

It is obvious that if the JCPOA were to fail, and especially if one of the members of the P5+1 was responsible, it would send an alarming message about our entire international security architecture, including the prospects for resolving the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula. We would like to reaffirm the relevance of Russia and China's proposals for a road map aimed at reaching an exclusively peaceful settlement of this issue.

We are gravely concerned about the growing threat of chemical terrorism in the Middle East, in particular in Iraq and Syria. Militants are not only using toxic chemicals but also have their own technological and manufacturing capacities for synthesizing full-fledged military toxic substances and have established far-reaching channels for access to their precursors. We should never ignore the very real threat of chemical terrorism spreading beyond the Middle East, particularly when we consider the significant numbers of foreigners who are fighting alongside the extremists. Terrorists who have come to Syria and Iraq from abroad have already had the opportunity to acquire practical experience and skills in manufacturing and using chemical weapons. For many years — the past three at least — we have repeatedly proposed adopting a Security Council resolution, or at least a presidential statement, condemning specific instances of chemical terrorism in Syria and Iraq. Unfortunately, all of our proposals have consistently met with obstinate

resistance from some of our Western colleagues, who prefer to turn a blind eye to the facts of the use, and even manufacture, of chemical weapons by terrorists, and to level unsubstantiated accusations at Damascus. We consider it unacceptable to exploit efforts to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in order to achieve narrow geopolitical aims, as occurred 15 years ago with the intervention in Iraq on an utterly trumped-up pretext.

We have recently witnessed persistent attempts to manipulate the activity of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism, which has concluded its work. This is deplorable, and we reiterate our proposal for creating a new mechanism for investigating incidents involving the use of chemical weapons in Syria on the basis of principles that fully reflect the standards of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

We also call on all States to comply with their obligations under resolution 1540 (2004), adopted in 2004, which directs all countries to take effective measures to prevent weapons of mass destruction and all other related materials from falling into the hands of non-State actors, including terrorists, of course. The resolution's relevance was reaffirmed by the Security Council following the 2016 comprehensive review of its implementation. The Council is required to respond severely to any breach of the resolution, whether in Syria, Iraq or elsewhere, especially in cases where non-State actors receive assistance in getting access to weapons of mass destruction. Russia supports efforts to establish and strengthen the national, regional and subregional capacities needed for dealing with these challenges. Under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs, we recently held a special seminar in Kaliningrad on the practical aspects of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Last year, during our chairmanship of the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation, we organized a special meeting on the issue. We also welcomed the consensus three months ago approving a decision by the OPCW Executive Council aimed at preventing threats of non-State actors using chemical weapons, which in our view is a step in the right direction.

In the interests of improving the effectiveness of multilateral cooperation in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the threat of such weapons falling into the hands of terrorist groups and other non-State actors, Russia has proposed formulating a new, legally binding instrument, in the form of an international convention to combat acts of chemical and biological terrorism. We presented the draft convention at the Conference on Disarmament, in Geneva, and we call for negotiations for its approval to begin as soon as possible.

The current state of affairs in non-proliferation and disarmament urgently requires us to work together to find ways of surmounting these growing contradictions, while taking a careful approach to the cooperative measures that have been proven to be effective and strengthening their international legal foundations by taking the interests of all States into account. We hope that today's Security Council meeting and the initiative put forward by the President of Kazakhstan will help us to resolve these issues.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In connection with the planned bilaterals, I am now obliged to leave this meeting. I will be replaced by Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Minister for Foreign of Kazakhstan. I genuinely thank the Secretary-General and all those who spoke today, including senior Government officials, Foreign Ministers of neighbouring countries, President Duda and Minister Lavrov. I thank them all for their interest and for the valuable proposals that have been put forward. I wish the Security Council the very best in its quest for peace on Earth.

Mrs. Haley (United States of America): I thank you, Sir, for convening today's meeting. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and his leadership in working to find enduring solutions to increasingly complex problems.

It is fitting that Kazakhstan has called this important meeting. One of Kazakhstan earliest decisions as an independent nation remains one of the most important moments in the history of non-proliferation. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan voluntarily removed Soviet nuclear weapons from its territory and joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. By rejecting nuclear weapons, President Nazarbayev set an example for the rest of the world. That action built confidence. It showed Kazakhstan's neighbours and the world that it was not a threat. It was a vote of confidence in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation effort. Critically, Kazakhstan's action

demonstrated that it valued peace and stability in its relations with other countries. It was an unmistakable concrete expression of Kazakhstan's willingness and readiness to be a responsible member of the community of nations.

The United States continues to lead in efforts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. We play a leading role in ensuring the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) — a landmark agreement that the Security Council unanimously adopted in 2004. Together with our partners, we work to assist States and international organizations in their efforts to prevent non-State actors from developing and acquiring nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their delivery systems. But the reality is that today's security environment is more challenging than in the past. An essential element of further nuclear disarmament is successfully addressing fundamental security challenges.

The regimes that most threaten the world today with weapons of mass destruction are also the source of different kinds of security challenges. They deny human rights and fundamental freedoms to their people. They promote regional instability. They aid terrorists and militant groups. They promote conflict that eventually spills over their borders. There is no greater threat to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime than that posed by North Korea. North Korea continues its reckless pursuit of nuclear weapons, in defiance of repeated resolutions by the Council. It continues to pursue nuclear weapons while its people starve, and to threaten other nations, while intimidating its own citizens. The example that Kazakhstan set and the efforts of so many others to curb the spread of nuclear weapons will begin to unravel if the Council cannot rise to the challenge. We call on all Member States to fulfil their obligations and fully implement all Council resolutions on North Korea. We will continue to work with our partners in the Security Council in pursuit of a peaceful, diplomatic solution to the crisis. However, let me say it one more time: the United States remains fully committed to defending itself and its allies if necessary.

The actions of the Iranian regime are another example. The regime in Tehran is the leading cause of instability in an unstable part of the world. It supports terrorists, proxy militants and murderers like Bashar Al-Assad. It provides ballistic missiles in violation of United Nations arms embargoes. Its proxies launch them at civilian targets, as we saw when Houthi militias in Yemen fired an Iranian-supplied missile at an airport in Riyadh. When the Iranian people protest their money being diverted to terrorists, the regime arrests and kills them. It silences their voices and lies about their motivations. When the Council adopted resolution 2231(2015), it endorsed the nuclear agreement and retained its series of prohibitions on Iran's behaviour.

The Iranian regime has repeatedly violated those prohibitions and, in doing so, it has repeatedly shown itself to be unworthy of our trust and our confidence. When the Council considers the question of how we can promote trust that States will not engage in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the place we must start and the very least we can do is to insist that States comply with their existing international obligations. In the case of Iran, while the United States continues to uphold its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the international community must also demand that Iran fulfil its obligations under resolution 2231 (2015). We impose those obligations as the Security Council. Together we must respond to Iran's dangerous violations, not because we want the nuclear agreement to fail but because we want the cause of non-proliferation to succeed.

We must not forget that weapons of mass destruction are not just an abstract threat, but weapons that evil regimes will put to use. The Syrian regime has repeatedly used chemical weapons against its own people. They are the actions of a Government so corrupt that it stands with the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) as the only entities to use chemical weapons as tools of warfare in the twenty-first century. The Security Council must respond to the outrageous violation of international law and basic human decency. The Council created the Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) for the express purpose of exposing the perpetrators of those crimes. The JIM determined that the Al-Assad regime and ISIS used chemical weapons in Syria. Both must be held accountable for their actions. However, one nation stands in the way of the Security Council fulfilling its duty. That nation is Russia.

It was Russia that vetoed three Council draft resolutions that would have renewed the Joint Investigative Mechanism. It is Russia that has gone to great lengths at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague to prevent the Al-Assad regime from being held accountable for its actions. If the Russian Government is serious about the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, it will convince its client, Mr. Al-Assad, that he must

eliminate his chemical weapons and cooperate fully with OPCW and the United Nations.

The Security Council tackles some of the greatest challenges to international peace and security daily. None is greater than the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. The United States works hard to ensure the non-proliferation of such deadly weapons. We encourage the creation of a security environment that benefits non-proliferation. We believe all nations have a moral responsibility to join in the creation of that environment.

Mr. Field (United Kingdom): On behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom, may I warmly congratulate Kazakhstan on becoming the first Central Asian nation to steer and preside over the Security Council. As has been pointed out, its historic commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament is well known. We welcome this important debate because our collective security and prosperity depend upon an effective global non-proliferation regime.

It is sometimes easy to forget just how recently the global community first coalesced around a common strategy in this sphere. There were very dark predictions made during the 1960s and the 1970s of a bleak world in which there would be dozens of nuclear armed States vying with each other. Yet today, thanks to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, that number of nuclear States remains in single figures.

Together we have painstakingly constructed a comprehensive set of rules, norms and standards that counter the proliferation of all types of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. If the rule book that we have written together is to remain effective in this century, we must all meet our responsibilities to protect and implement our common rules, norms and standards, and we must hold those who breach them properly to account. The success or failure depends upon our ability to work together, and this is illustrated most recently by the examples of Iran, North Korea and Syria, which I shall now briefly discuss.

The threat of a nuclear Iran brought the international community — the Security Council — together to defend our commonly held rules and to protect our shared security interests. Through our painstaking joint diplomacy and accorded pressure, Iran finally came to the negotiating table. Collectively we agreed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which we in the United Kingdom continue steadfastly to support. We should always remember that before the deal, Iran could have produced enough fissile material for a weapon in a few months. Now all experts would suggest that this would take at least a year. All of us in the Security Council should be proud of this success that we achieved by working together. Let us continue this work.

On North Korea, rightly, we have had successes, not least because we have worked together. North Korea has repeatedly and continuously flouted our non-proliferation rules with deepening consequences for international security. We agreed that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's development of a nuclear programme is illegal and cannot be accepted. In response, the Council collectively has imposed the strictest sanctions in a generation with a number of Security Council resolutions. We may rest assured that these measures are already having an impact. The Security Council must, in my view, continue to stand united on both North Korea and Iran.

By contrast, the Security Council has not been as united in response to the use of chemical weapons in Syria. Regrettably, it has been Russia that has repeatedly wielded its veto in the Council, despite clear conclusions from an impartial independent expert investigation set up by the Council itself that the Syrian regime and Da'esh have repeatedly used chemical weapons. I fear that the Council's lack of unity and resolve on Syria sends the most dangerous possible signal of a confused message to would-be proliferators of the future. The Security Council must be prepared to hold all transgressors to account and the United Kingdom implores those in the Council who have stood in the way of action to join the consensus for the future.

The lesson for the Council could not be clearer. When we work together, we can persuade and cajole States to abandon their ambitions to obtain weapons of mass destruction. If we do not, it is the most vulnerable — civilians, often — who suffer and the security of the world is put at risk.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains a cornerstone of international security. Although the pace of non-proliferation and disarmament is often frustratingly slow, it is vital not to lose sight of the ambitious vision that the Treaty embodies. Its achievements stem from its development over time by consensus and because it has offered tangible benefits to each and everyone of its signatories. By contrast, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear

Weapons would offer no solutions to the very complex security challenges that we face, nor in my view to the significant technical challenges of nuclear disarmament. That is why the United Kingdom will not become a party to the nuclear weapon-ban treaty. We do not consider that its prohibitions represent an emerging rule of customary international law.

The United Kingdom remains committed to a world without nuclear weapons. We believe that the best way to achieve this goal is through gradual multilateral disarmament, negotiated step by step, within existing frameworks. There is much more that we can do if we continue to work together. We can continue the voluntary moratoriums on nuclear weapon testing and also work for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We can prevent nuclear, chemical and biological material from falling into the hands of terrorists by working for full and effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), and we can tackle the threat of ballistic missiles by encouraging Member States to consider acceding or adhering to the missile technology control regime and the Hague Code of Conduct.

The Security Council has, as we know, a very special role to play in safeguarding international peace and security. As ever, it is the unity of the Security Council and the United Nations beyond that is vital. Together, we must continue working to prevent proliferation; together, we must hold to account those States that breach our rules; and together, we must persuade and cajole would-be proliferators to abandon their ambitions to develop weapons of mass destruction. The United Kingdom remains ready to work closely with all members of the Security Council towards these important goals, which I believe are essential for the future security of humankind.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a privilege to see you, Mr. President, presiding over this meeting of the Security Council. We are also honoured to have enjoyed the presence of His Excellency Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. We take the opportunity to congratulate his country's delegation on the excellent work that it has done to date as President of the Security Council. We also thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his briefing and his leadership on the subject that Kazakhstan chose for today's discussion.

Bolivia, in the context of its dedication to respecting international law and as a pacifist State that promotes a culture of peace and the right to peace, advocates the peaceful settlement of disputes, good offices, preventive diplomacy, multilateralism, non-interference and respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States as universal principles recognized by the international community, which are effective tools to avoid the scourge of war and its consequences.

We are meeting at a time when we are experiencing a reality of great tensions at the global level. Bolivia is concerned about the considerable number of armed conflicts, which carry heavy humanitarian cost. We have chosen the path of the culture of dialogue among nations through the peoples' diplomacy. In that regard, we stress the need to adopt a wide-ranging approach if we are to achieve peace and prevent conflicts by analysing their structural causes, strengthening the rule of law and promoting economic growth and social development.

Bolivia, which belongs to the first densely populated area in the world that declared itself free of nuclear weapons, through the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, better known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and to the first region to have declared itself a zone of peace — and thanks to the peace process, the last armed conflict in our region is being resolved in Colombia — has the authority to call for this example to be replicated in other parts of the world.

In that connection, we believe that the Members of our Organization have the great challenge to implement the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was adopted by the General Assembly on 7 July 2017. It is time for countries to commit to prohibiting the development, testing, production, procurement and possession of nuclear arsenals and explosives. We note the decision of countries such as Kazakhstan to abandon the possession of nuclear weapons from its defence doctrines and national security policies. In line with our support for non-proliferation, we reiterate our opposition to the carrying out of any type of nuclear test or launching of ballistic missiles capable of carrying weapons of mass destruction. We call for the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of all nuclear programmes without peaceful ends and all ballistic missiles.

In that regard, we believe that the best preventive measure is the elimination of all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. As such, in the specific context of the conflict on the Korean peninsula, we believe political dialogue is the only way to achieve the denuclearization of the region. In that connection, the development of mutual confidence-building measures is essential. We highlight the willingness shown by the Governments of the Republic of Korea and of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to begin negotiations in order to facilitate the attendance of a North Korean delegation in the upcoming Winter Olympics and the participation of both countries in the inaugural ceremony under the same flag.

Another success in the implementation of mutual confidence-building measures is the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran's nuclear programme, which was negotiated among the five permanent members of the Council, the European Union and the International Atomic Energy Agency. That development showed the readiness of the parties to reach a peaceful and consensus-based agreement.

As Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), Bolivia is firmly convinced that cooperation among States is critical to its implementation so as to avert non-State actors from acquiring or utilizing chemical, biological or nuclear weapons. We also note that the Committee is a platform for assistance among States, not a mechanism for coercion or to channel sanctions against States.

Finally, we look on with concern at multimillion dollar investments in the military-industrial complex. Those exorbitant sums could be used instead to face the grave humanitarian crisis, to fulfil the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to eradicate poverty and inequality and to thereby build a more just and humane world.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We also are gratified to see you preside over the Security Council, Mr. President, and we commend Kazakhstan for its exceptional work during its presidency. My delegation welcomes the timely convening of this high-level debate on confidence-building measures needed to ensure the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and we thank President Nursultan Nazarbayev for his participation. We likewise note Kazakhstan's leadership in setting a bold example for the international community on nuclear disarmament. We also thank the Secretary-General for his salient briefing.

As expressed in the document entitled "Manifesto: the world, the twenty-first century", endorsed by President of Kazakhstan, nothing can be further from the objectives of peace, security and development than the grave threat of the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery. We agree with that vision and would like to share three comments accordingly.

First, Peru is committed to disarmament and the non-proliferation regimes on weapons of mass destruction. We believe that ensuring international peace and security means eliminating the risk posed by such weapons. There is no better means to do that than to guarantee their non-existence. As such, we must promote disarmament. Thanks to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, agreed at Tlatelolco, we are part of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated region of the world. In line with such commitments, we call for the universalization of international instruments, such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the recent Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which establishes the illegality of the use and possession of such weapons.

Secondly, Peru believes that the challenges faced by the nuclear non-proliferation regime are the gravest threats to peace and security worldwide today. Consequently, ensuring a united Council so as to enable an effective and consistent response to such challenges is, in our view, a priority. From our perspective, that requires first addressing the challenge posed by the nuclear and ballistic programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The nuclear non-proliferation regime must also be enforced through the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear programme — a prime example of the implementation of confidence-building measures as monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency. We also want to highlight the importance of preserving the commitment of the Council with regard to the unacceptable use of chemical weapons in Syria, with a view to fully investigating the facts and punishing the parties responsible.

Thirdly, in this complex context, Peru agrees that we must go beyond the imposition of sanctions. We must promote preventive diplomacy and build the necessary

trust to safeguard the non-proliferation regimes through a more comprehensive approach. Indeed, in many cases, distrust generates a perception of insecurity that, in turn, leads to increasing stockpiling of arms. We must address that perception in order to counter proliferation and arms stockpiling, particularly in the nuclear arena. In order to do so, creating open channels of communication and mutual understanding, devising open and transparent processes, setting up monitoring and verification mechanisms and crisis control protocols are, inter alia, confidence-building measures that make up a basic foundation for cooperation that will help mitigate the risk of escalation or accidents that could have grave consequences.

Today, as Peru has the privilege of receiving a visit by Pope Francis, we would like to conclude by recalling the message that His Holiness delivered on 25 September 2015 before the General Assembly with regard to the topic that brings us here today:

> "A system of ethics and laws based on the threat of mutual destruction, and possibly the destruction of all humankind, is a contradiction in terms and an affront to the entire edifice of the United Nations, which would become a group of nations united by fear and mistrust." (*A/70/PV.3, p. 5*)

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): It is good to see you back at the United Nations, Mr. President. I want to begin by thanking Kazakhstan for convening today's timely meeting on a very important issue. Your country's historic contribution to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is commendable. Indeed, by your decision, more than 25 years ago, to give up nuclear weapons, showed that nuclear disarmament is indeed possible. Your personal commitment to end nuclear testing and promote the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty deserves our thanks. It is a priority shared by my country and by all members of the European Union.

Let me also thank the Secretary-General for his thoughtful intervention this morning. We fully agree with the Secretary-General's new year's message that global anxieties about nuclear weapons are their highest level since the Cold War. Speculations in recent months about the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons are an unwelcome echo from the past.

Meanwhile, both State and non-State actors push the boundaries of our common values through the use of chemical weapons. There is no doubt that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a serious threat to international peace and security.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are two sides of the same coin and mutually reinforcing. Making progress on both fronts must be a priority for the international community and for the Security Council. It is not only a moral and humanitarian responsibility, but also essential for our common security interests.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the indispensable framework and the cornerstone of global disarmament and non-proliferation. We are committed to the success of the current NPT review cycle. That will require making progress on all three pillars of the Treaty, including disarmament, concerning which the nuclear-weapon States have a special responsibility. The widespread frustration within the international community regarding the lack of progress within the NPT context is real and well-founded. It needs to be addressed by concrete progress in the implementation of existing disarmament commitments.

Effective disarmament will require sincere negotiations in good faith within the framework of all existing conventions. We must all act according to our commitments and live up to our promises. On the path ahead, it is essential that we build mutual trust, as was stressed by the Secretary-General and President Nazarbayev earlier this morning, including by increasing understanding for each another's perspectives — something clearly lacking today. We must also mobilize the necessary political will to negotiate and compromise in order to reach a positive outcome.

The paralysis in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), which is now in its twenty-second year, should be a matter of concern for us all. Sweden will assume the rotating presidency of the CD next month. We will make every effort to define a combination of substantive issues based upon which a programme of work can finally be agreed and that we hope may help to break the deadlock.

We are also faced with the increasing threat of weapons of mass destruction being acquired by non-State actors. Collective efforts are needed to meet the evolving threats and uphold the global non-proliferation regime. All States must work to implement their obligations pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

Confidence-building measures can help reduce tensions, prevent conflicts and build the trust necessary for effective disarmament and non-proliferation. Such efforts are strengthened if they are based on the clear principles of accountability, transparency, irreversibility and verifiability. The nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia provides a good example of where those principles have been applied. It was the first zone of its kind to be based on verification according to the model additional protocol of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). That provided the IAEA with the ability to verify not only the non-diversion of declared nuclear material, but also the absence of undeclared nuclear material as well as activities in participating States.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is another important example of the potential of diplomacy. The JCPOA is designed to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme That crucial agreement contributes to stability within and beyond the region, and contributes significantly to strengthening the global non-proliferation architecture. As reiterated by High Representative of the European Union Federica Mogherini, and by many others around the table today, the European Union remains committed to supporting the full implementation of the JCPOA, and it is vital that all parties continue to implement their commitments. IAEA verification and the Joint Commission for addressing implementation matters are both indispensable components of the agreement. In addition, we look forward to Iran's early ratification of the additional protocol, which is essential to building confidence and ensuring sustainability.

The Council has repeatedly addressed the testing of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in breach of international obligations and contrary to the existing global norm against nuclear testing embodied in the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We continue to condemn those actions in the strongest terms. The full and comprehensive implementation of the Council's relevant resolutions by all United Nations States Members is needed. At the same time, sanctions alone will not solve the current crisis on the Korean peninsula. Efforts are needed to pave the way for a peaceful, diplomatic and political solution to the conflict. In parallel to effectively implementing the sanctions regime, we must undertake further work to reduce tensions and build trust. We welcome the latest developments on the peninsula, including the steps taken to reopen channels of communication, such as military-to-military dialogue. That is an important means to avoid misunderstandings and reduce tensions. We also welcome the decision of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to participate in the Olympic Games. Those are positive developments. It is important to seize that window of opportunity and support all efforts that can lead to denuclearization and peaceful relations on the Korean peninsula.

Stepped-up efforts are also needed to address the issue of chemical weapons. The use of such weapons in Syria and Iraq is illegal and unacceptable. There can be no impunity for such grave violations of international law. Those responsible must be identified and brought to justice. We deeply regret the multiple instances of the use of the veto in the Council, thereby hindering accountability. Recent allegations of the use of chlorine gas in Syria and ongoing investigations by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Fact-finding Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic serve only to further illustrate the need to continue our efforts to develop a new mechanism for attribution so as to ensure accountability and uphold the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The Council has a responsibility in that regard, and we will continue our efforts to find a way forward.

In his New Year's message, the Secretary-General urged leaders to bring people together around common goals. Surely, one of those goals must be furthering non-proliferation and disarmament. The Council must work together and enhance its efforts to promote and uphold progress, including by helping building confidence and trust among countries. We will continue to work actively will all partners to further disarmament, non-proliferation, respect for international law and accountability for those who violate international norms and obligations.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Kazakh presidency for organizing this important and equally timely meeting on confidence and transparency measures on weapons of mass destruction. It was a particular honour to have President Nazarbayev and President Duda present among us this morning, and I am very happy to see you, Mr. Minister here today once again. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his very enlightening briefing.

Almost a century ago, the atrocities resulting from the use of chemical weapons during the First World War led us to jointly initiate and develop, piece by piece, the current non-proliferation regime on weapons of mass destruction. That regime is today the backbone of the international security architecture. As the past year has tragically reminded us, it is nevertheless under attack and has been possibly put in jeopardy. The proliferation of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons and their means of delivery remains a dangerous reality. In Asia and the Middle East, the most robust and fundamental non-proliferation and disarmament norms are systematically, and even flagrantly, violated. Let us make no mistake: the stakes are extremely high. Beyond the immediate implications concerning peace and security, what is at stake is long-term strategic stability, which implicates the security of all our States. That is why combating weapons of mass destruction is, and must remain, at the heart of the Security Council's priorities, and why France intends to remain committed to such a critical issue.

With the barbaric use of toxic chemical agents in Syria, Iraq and Asia, we are witnessing the deadly reappearance of weapons that sow fear and death among civilians. The use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime against its own people is but one tragic example of that. On behalf of France, I recall that trivializing that situation, owing to our failure to build an international consensus to find a solution for it, steadily increases the risk of chemical terrorism, which is something we all fear. It exacerbates regional instability and weakens the international security architecture, for which the Council is both the guardian and ultimate guarantor.

The same observation applies to North Korea's actions. The North Korean regime is determined to acquire an operational nuclear arsenal, in systematic and blatant violation of its obligations. The threat has reached a critical level and concerns us all. It is therefore necessary today, through the pressure being applied, to find a political solution so as to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The unity and resolute commitment of the Security Council are a prerequisite condition for success.

In such an uncertain and complex environment, trust and transparency at the regional and multilateral levels — among the priorities behind our meetings — are more than ever core values that we must safeguard and nurture. That is especially true with regard to the non-proliferation regime. As the Secretary-General recalled, it is based on binding commitments, followed by a rigorous verification of their implementation. That is in particular the role of such international bodies as the International Atomic Energy Agency and Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), whose work France actively supports.

I also reiterate our resolute commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — the fiftieth anniversary of which we will celebrate this year — as well as our firm opposition to any international initiative that might undermine it. I would also like to especially express our full support for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as soon as possible. We call upon all countries that have not yet acceded to the Treaty to do so without delay — I refer in particular to countries whose accession is required.

France also supports the implementation by all of the commitments made under resolution 1540 (2004), adopted by the Council to prevent non-State actors from obtaining weapons of mass destruction. That is a topical issue because we are more than ever concerned about possible transfers to non-State entities, particularly in the area of missiles. In that respect, it is crucial that States that have not yet done so adopt export-control legislation and the corresponding administrative arrangements.

Lastly, as members are aware, France is very involved in the Proliferation Security Initiative. France intends to continue actively supporting non-proliferation efforts and, as I have said, remain proactive regarding the Initiative. France is convinced that with the determination of the international community, based on pragmatic and realistic multilateralism, it is possible to find solutions to the proliferation crises. Allow me, in that regard, to mention the Iranian case.

My country actively contributed to the development of the robust, solid and verifiable agreement that is now the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. As we have already said, we want rigorous implementation of that agreement and of resolution 2231 (2015). Taken together, those texts constitute the cornerstone of stability and regional and international security. Nevertheless, the agreement does not address all of our concerns, in particular with respect to Iran's ballistic activities. That is why we hope that frank dialogue will take place on the matter.

Similarly, the reinstatement of a total ban on the use of chemical weapons is urgently needed. Impunity cannot, and will not, be an option. That was the merit of the Joint Investigative Mechanism — the dissolution of which is particularly regrettable; however, we must not stand by idly. Criminals identified as having resorted to such weapons, whether State or non-State actors, should be punished, and those who might consider it deterred.

That is why France has decided to convene in Paris on 23 January countries that share that same concern, in order to effectively work together against the unacceptable impunity for the use of chemical weapons. A new intergovernmental partnership will be set up on that occasion, the purpose of which will be to assist and support existing mechanisms in their investigative work as well as international organizations, primarily the OPCW, which is in charge of that issue.

With the risk of erosion in the non-proliferation regime, it is our security as a whole, as well as the very existence of the rule of law as the foundation of multilateralism, that are in peril. In the light of the magnitude of the stakes, it is our collective responsibility to safeguard and strengthen the gains that together we have made, by building confidence and transparency among all parties respecting their non-proliferation commitments. France remains fully committed to that end.

Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the presence at this Security Council meeting of His Excellency Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, as well as that of the President of Poland, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and the Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific of the United Kingdom. The presence of such leaders confers particular prominence to our work. I would like to thank Kazakhstan for organizing this briefing on such a crucial subject. My delegation also extends its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his briefing and vision on this question, which has preoccupied the Organization and Council for many years.

Aware of the threat posed to humankind by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the United Nations established a series of instruments and multilateral mechanisms very early on, with the aim of reducing or eliminating all or part of those weapons in the long-term. Those instruments include the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and various Security Council resolutions, including resolution 1540 (2004) as well as subsequent resolutions. Despite such existing mechanisms, the relevance of which is well established, it is clear that much remains to be done in the area of non-proliferation and the elimination of all such weapons.

Various recent issues — namely, the Iran nuclear deal, the North Korean nuclear and ballistic tests and the alleged use of chemical weapons by Islamic State terrorists — pose a challenge to the non-proliferation regime and require special attention and vigilance on the part of the Council. We must therefore go further collectively in the adoption of binding regimes for the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction and in strengthening dialogue among States.

We must realize that, despite the signing of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, that category of weapons of mass destruction is increasingly a growing threat. That is due to the fact that the major nuclear Powers have shied away from the Treaty and, in addition, have opposed the establishment of binding legal instruments, as called for by all other countries. The nuclear Powers must rally to the international consensus on the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons and strengthen dialogue with other countries in the context of collective security guarantees. In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire calls for a further reduction of all nuclear arsenals in order to discourage countries that are tempted to join the group of nuclear Powers.

In that context, nuclear-armed countries and other concerned countries must create the conditions for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in order to prevent the development of new nuclear weapons and the production of large quantities of fissile material and other nuclear waste. Beyond the agreements, the nuclear countries must provide the necessary guarantees with respect to the handling and storage of those materials, which constitute a real danger for the countries of the South, and also provide safety and nuclear security guarantees.

My country, which has made peace its guiding principle, certainly is in favour of a firm position, but we are not closed to ongoing dialogue on those issues. We also attach the highest importance to Africa remaining a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We also call on

the nuclear Powers and the African countries to combat the pollution of the continent by nuclear materials.

It is therefore important that the international community mobilize in support of the Iranian nuclear agreement, in accordance with resolution 2231 (2015), as the safest guarantee for preventing an arms race in the Middle East, with the clear threat of proliferation.

Similarly, the thaw in the relations between the two Koreas, following the tensions arising from the nuclear and ballistic tests by North Korea, is to be welcomed and encouraged through the opening of a comprehensive dialogue that includes all stakeholders in the crisis on the Korean peninsula. That thaw augurs well for the Olympic Winter Games in South Korea. It should be welcomed and encouraged in order to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

Finally, allegations of the use of chemical weapons by terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria, if proved, would constitute a serious violation of the non-proliferation regime and a challenge to our collective security. The Council must reach agreement on that issue in order to allow for an investigation of the facts, in particular in Syria, and to bring to justice those found responsible.

True to its tradition of peace, Côte d'Ivoire has always advocated the settlement of all disputes through dialogue. It therefore follows that we ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 6 March 1973 and, on 20 July 2017, signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted by the General Assembly on 7 July 2017. The latter instrument is crucial to building a safer world and to guaranteeing the future of humankind, since the risk of a nuclear confrontation is no longer an academic theory.

Côte d'Ivoire will therefore continue to support global efforts to eradicate nuclear weapons and their means of delivery from the face of the Earth by helping to strengthen the non-proliferation regime and to expand its scope, on the one hand, and by ensuring the strict implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), in particular with regard to non-State actors, on the other hand. Our efforts to implement a global non-proliferation architecture would be in vain if they were not part of a comprehensive approach to strengthening cooperation and assistance among States, on the one hand, and between States and subregional, regional and international organizations, on the other.

That reasoning leads my country to recall the two pillars on which the Council's activities in that area are based, namely, the responsibility to establish a system for the regulation of armaments, as provided for in Article 26 of the Charter of the United Nations, and the pursuit of a number of objectives, ranging from respect for the prohibition of the use of biological and chemical weapons to the prevention of the acquisition of such weapons by non-State actors, in accordance with the primary responsibility of the United Nations to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security.

In that perspective, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) could support States that so wish in strengthening their national capacities for sharing experiences and good practices. Strengthening national and regional capacities is all the more necessary given recent technological developments, including the miniaturization of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, which increase the risk of proliferation and the acquisition of such weapons by terrorist groups.

Like Kazakhstan, your country, Mr. President, whose commitment to building a world free of weapons of mass destruction is to be welcomed, the Ivorian delegation would like to reiterate the willingness of Côte d'Ivoire to fully implement the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes for weapons of mass destruction with a view to achieving a safer world free of nuclear weapons. We express our full support for your country's appeal to the permanent members of the Security Council to work to build of a nuclear-free world by 2045, which coincides with the centenary of the Organization.

Côte d'Ivoire also supports the call for nuclear States to refrain from the first use nuclear weapons in the case of conflict.

Finally, my country welcomes the holding in May of the United Nations high-level conference on nuclear disarmament, which is clearly a key step in the process of establishing a global non-proliferation regime and completely eliminating nuclear weapons.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): We express our appreciation to the Kazakh presidency for organzing this high-level briefing on a very important issue, which has been at the top of the Security Council agenda for the past year. We were very pleased to see the President of Kazakhstan presiding over this meeting as the leader of a country that decided not to have nuclear weapons on

its territory. He made a wise decision in that regard, and we appreciate his vision and wisdom on that important issue. We are always appreciative of the Secretary-General for his briefings. We are also very pleased to see the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan presiding over the meeting at this point.

Since the end of the Cold War, the threat posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons has never been as deeply worrying as it is today. We all know the unimaginable potential danger that humankind would face should the non-proliferation regime be further weakened. That is why a world free of nuclear weapons is an important objective, which we in Ethiopia fully support and subscribe to, as do many States Members of the United Nations. We are also party to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, the Pelindaba Treaty.

Moreover, we recognize the challenge that the world faces today with regard to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the fact that the international norm set by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is being seriously tested. The question before us today, therefore, is what can be done to respond to the current challenges and to preserve that important international norm. We believe that the issues raised in the concept note (S/2018/4, annex) in terms of prevention and confidence-building measures are very timely and relevant.

Let me stress that we deeply appreciate the proposals made by the President of Kazkahstan in that regard. In our view, it is important to comprehensively address risks of proliferation through political and diplomatic means aimed at finding a negotiated solution. For example, we believe that the manner in which the States participating in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) managed to address the Iranian nuclear issue is a significant achievement for multilateralism. Of course, we recognize that much more needs to be done to resolve misunderstandings and to prevent any possible obstacles to the full implementation of the JCPOA.

We believe, as the Secretary-General stated, that issues not directly related to the JCPOA should be addressed without prejudice to the provisions of the Agreement and its accomplishments. We therefore hope that the participating countries will continue to uphold their commitment to that important deal, which has enormous significance to international peace and security within the international non-proliferation regime. We believe that it is essential to adopt confidence-building measures in order to build trust among the participating States, and we hope that the President will take steps in that direction.

Based on the lessons learned from the Iranian nuclear deal, it is important to explore ways and means of addressing the serious threat posed by the nuclear and ballistic missile programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is increasingly apparent that there is no other option but a peaceful and diplomatic path to resolving the crisis in the Korean peninsula. It is for that reason that priority should be given to easing heightened tensions and avoiding the risk of miscalculation. In that regard, we welcome the recent high-level intra-Korean talks and the agreement reached to ease military tensions, hold military-to-military talks and reopen the inter-Korean military hotline, which we hope will help to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula. We also welcome the agreement reached between the United States and the Republic of Korea to postpone their joint military exercises.

Undeniably, such developments are encouraging and should facilitate the resumption of serious dialogue. At this stage, it is important to create an atmosphere conducive to the holding of such dialogue. We hope that the Winter Olympic Games will be instrumental in promoting that kind of atmosphere and in building confidence. We welcome the decision of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to send its delegation to the Winter Olympic Games, and we also appreciate the Secretary-General's decision to attend the opening ceremony of the Games. On the other hand, we are under no illusion that resolving the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will be easy. It is absolutely important that all sides start to take small but meaningful steps to build the necessary trust and confidence that could help pave the way for the resumption of dialogue and negotiation towards finding a comprehensive and lasting solution to the issue surrounding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and denuclearizing the Korean peninsula. We must take serious note of the proposal by the President on this matter.

That brings me to my third point on the broader threat to international peace and security and to humankind posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including by non-State actors. Multilateral agreements, such as the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

continue to contribute immensely to the prevention and elimination of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including into the hands of non-State actors and terrorist groups. Nonetheless, much remains to be done to ensure the universal accession to and the full implementation of such agreements. Regional nuclear-weapon-free zones, such as the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, also remain central to the global and regional non-proliferation regimes in the creation of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Security Council plays a critical role in addressing the serious threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by using all the available tools at its disposal, including sanctions. As we have seen over the past year, the unity of the Council is absolutely critical to addressing non-proliferation issues, and everything must be done to preserve it. It is also important to ensure that the various decisions and measures taken by the Council are adhered to by all Member States. With regard to advocacy and follow-up, the role of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Council remains vital.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming Ethiopia's commitment to upholding the international non-proliferation regime and fulfilling its obligations in implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions without fail.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China thanks Kazakhstan for its initiative to convene today's Security Council meeting on non-proliferation.

China thanks His Excellency President Nazarbayev for presiding over today's meeting. We also welcome Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister back to New York.

We thank Secretary-General Guterres for his briefing.

Peace and development remain two main contemporary issues. However, our world has yet to achieve peace. Regional hotspots continue to emerge and traditional and non-traditional security threats are on the rise. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems constitute genuine threats to international peace, security and stability and are common challenges faced by the international community.

Owing to the international community's efforts in recent years, consensus has been reached on the international non-proliferation regime. The regime is increasingly enhanced by the improved capacity of States and greater in-depth cooperation. We must acknowledge that proliferation risks and challenges remain severe. Some non-proliferation hotspot issues are protracted and intractable. Technological advances have lowered the threshold for proliferation. The risk of non-State actors, and terrorists in particular, acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction is increasing. The authority, universality and effectiveness of the international non-proliferation regime must be enhanced urgently.

President Xi Jinping of China has stressed that no country can respond on its own to the fiercest challenges facing humankind and or return to self-imposed isolation. We urge the people of the world to work together to build a shared destiny for humankind and a world that is open, inclusive, clean and beautiful, with lasting peace, universal security and shared prosperity. China is of the view that strengthening global governance in the area of non-proliferation is an important component for building a shared destiny for humankind. The international community must therefore enhance cooperation and coordination in many dimensions.

First, a commitment to achieving common security is vital. Non-proliferation is in essence a security issue. Security concerns are the main drivers of proliferation activities. All countries should reject the Cold War mentality, remain resolute in adhering to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, foster a concept of shared, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, build a new form of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice and win-win cooperation, and create a security trend that features fairness and justice, joint contributions and common benefits. The United Nations and the Security Council should bring into full play their essential role in ending war and maintaining peace, finding a path to effectively prevent conflicts, and building enduring peace in order to achieve common security for all countries. That will fundamentally eliminate the drivers of proliferation. It is also a fundamental way for all countries to build confidence.

Secondly, it is important to commit to the peaceful resolution of issues by political and diplomatic means. Confrontation and unrelenting sanctions and pressure will lead only to the escalation of conflict and the increased risk of proliferation. All countries should remain on the path to the peaceful resolution of conflict

and strive to resolve non-proliferation hotspot issues by political and diplomatic means.

At present, some positive changes have emerged on the Korean peninsula. All parties should make a concerted effort to maintain the hard-won momentum of reduced tensions, create the conditions for relaunching dialogue and negotiations and return the nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula to dialogue and negotiation.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran is a hard-won and important accomplishment of multilateralism. It is also a model for resolving international hotspot issues by political and diplomatic means. The relevant parties should bear in mind their overall situation and long-term interests, maintain their political will, manage differences properly and continue to comprehensively and effectively implement the JCPOA.

Thirdly, there must be a commitment to consolidating and developing the international non-proliferation regime. With the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, Biological Weapons Convention and resolution 1540 (2004) as its legal bases, and with international organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons as its institutional mechanisms, the international non-proliferation regime is an important component of the global security order and has played a vital role in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and in maintaining global strategic balance and stability. The international community should effectively maintain the universality, authority and effectiveness of the regime, continue to improve relevant international norms, adhere to equality before norms, and discard double standards and elective practices. The international non-proliferation regime founded on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons must be maintained, and whoever acquires nuclear weapons illegally must effectively comply with the obligation to denuclearize.

Fourthly, with respect to the commitment to enhancing States' non-proliferation capacities, the primary responsibility for non-proliferation should be assumed by Governments. Non-proliferation policies developed in accordance with country-specific situations should be respected and supported in order to push for continuous improvement of non-proliferation laws and regulations and to strengthen capacity-building in enforcement. All countries should, in the spirit of openness, inclusion, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, conduct exchanges and practical cooperation in non-proliferation so as to jointly enhance their capacity and the level of non-proliferation. The needs of developing countries for international non-proliferation assistance should be effectively met. At the same time, a comprehensive and balanced approach should be put in place to promote non-proliferation and the use of science and technology for peaceful purposes. Non-proliferation should not be used as an excuse to limit or deprive countries of their rights to use science and technology for peaceful purposes and to promote international cooperation.

China has consistently advocated for peace, development and cooperation in order to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and support the prevention of conflicts. China is firmly opposed to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. China has acceded to all international conventions and joined relevant international organizations in the field of non-proliferation. China has built a complete system of non-proliferation and export control and ensured the effective implementation of relevant laws and regulations. China comprehensively and fully implements relevant Council resolutions, actively participates in international and regional cooperation on non-proliferation, supports the United Nations in playing its role in non-proliferation, and commits to pushing for a political solution to non-proliferation hotspot issues.

China constructively participated in the negotiation and implementation process of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran and put forward its own proposals.

China has work tirelessly to promote a negotiated solution to the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. China's suspension-for-suspension initiative and two-track approach, as well as the road map jointly proposed by China and Russia, are realistic and feasible for appropriately resolving the nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula. China hopes for a positive response and support from all sides on this. A denuclearized, peaceful and stable Korean peninsula is in the interest of all parties. The unity of the international community on this issue is critical. China would like to work with the international community, engage in close communication, display mutual confidence and mutual respect, and strengthen cooperation in pursuing

continued progress towards a suitable solution to the Korean peninsula issue.

Non-proliferation is a long-term task before the international community. It requires the involvement of all countries. China is a builder of world peace and a guardian of the international non-proliferation regime. China would like to continue to work with all parties in making a greater contribution to enhancing the international non-proliferation regime, advancing global governance in non-proliferation and building a common destiny of humankind.

Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands): Let me first express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, and the Republic of Kazakhstan for convening this meeting on this very important topic. We commend Kazakhstan for its continued leadership role in this area. On a personal note, allow me to add that it is a pleasure to see you, Minister Abdrakhmanov, back in New York and presiding over the Council. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his very informative briefing.

As declared repeatedly by the Council, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a threat to international peace and security. Therefore, the Kingdom of the Netherlands attaches the greatest importance to making every effort to prevent the use, stop the spread and ultimately achieve a world free of weapons of mass destruction. In that light, I will make three main points here today, concerning the importance of the non-proliferation architecture, the need for attention for implementation, and the need for activities to strengthen the architecture.

On my first point, achieving a world without weapons of mass destruction starts with the current non-proliferation architecture — that is, the international regimes and norms that underpin our efforts against proliferation. The NPT is the cornerstone of the international regime to prevent nuclear proliferation and to work towards nuclear disarmament. Chemical and biological weapons are fully banned by the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. The Hague is the proud host of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. As the Polish President mentioned earlier, we attach great value to The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

However, proliferation concerns are not restricted to States alone. Non-State actors represent a growing threat when it comes to weapons and materials of mass destruction. We must make every effort to prevent such weapons and materials from falling into the hands of terrorists. This, of course, is the purview of resolution 1540 (2004). This comprehensive architecture of non-proliferation norms and obligations is the foundation of international peace and security.

This brings me to my second point. We must pay constant attention to the implementation of our obligations, because clearly the non-proliferation architecture is not free from violations. It is imperative that all countries fulfil their commitments in order to bring us closer to the goal of a world free of weapons of mass destruction. We have to work persistently to universalize, implement, verify and enforce the international non-proliferation norms. Non-compliance must always be addressed and enforcement measures have to be taken. Doing so, and doing so effectively, will also strengthen international confidence in the architecture.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is a milestone accomplishment of international diplomacy and has proven to be a success, as verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency. It is essential that all parties continue to fulfil their commitments under the JCPOA. As facilitator for resolution 2231 (2015), I look forward to working with all parties to ensure full and comprehensive implementation of the resolution. I welcome the suggestion just made by our French colleague for a frank dialogue with Iran on related issues.

When States fail to live up to their obligations and endanger international peace and security, we must act with common purpose to find diplomatic solutions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has repeatedly defied its international obligations. Its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes threaten not just regional, but also global stability and security. The international community has been swift and strong in its condemnation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's actions and the Council has imposed the heaviest sanctions ever. To make these sanctions work, we need scrupulous and worldwide implementation. As Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), I am working with all parties to this end, building on the work of Italy, our split-term party in 2017-2018. Of course, as others have said, we welcome recent developments of increased contacts

between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The use of chemical weapons in Syria, especially by the Government, as well as by terrorist groups, is another grave violation of international norms and is unacceptable. We regret the dismantling of the Organiation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism. We must ensure accountability for such acts, lest we undermine the rule of law and the humanity that underpin the United Nations system. Let me recall in this context the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic and the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic.

Turning to my third point, we must engage in new activities to further strengthen the non-proliferation architecture. The first example is the cycle of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). While obstacles remain, the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee set us on the path towards a successful review cycle. As Chair of the first Preparatory Committee, we found that, even when different States and regions have different priorities, support for the NPT remains strong. We should build on this support to preserve our common ground and reach our shared goals.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands also values initiatives aimed at facilitating cooperation and dialogue. We promote progress towards a fissile material cut-off treaty and support the important work being done on the topic of nuclear disarmament verification. We call on all States to make every effort to realize the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We must continue to push for the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), and we should support the work of international organizations and actively engage in multilateral initiatives, such as the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

In conclusion, only together can we maintain and strengthen international norms against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. That will require implementing our commitments and complying with our obligations under the relevant treaty regimes. It will require building upon our commitments to further strengthening the non-proliferation architecture. And it will require addressing and enforcing issues of non-compliance, collectively and effectively. These steps will serve to build confidence. They will serve to enhance international peace and security, and help to prevent conflict, which is a fundamental responsibility of the Council.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): The presence of persons of note at this meeting of the Security Council is a testament to the great importance of the topic under consideration — the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. As such, we wish to congratulate and thank Kazakhstan for including this issue in its programme of work. We also thank Secretary-General Guterres for sharing his prescient ideas.

This report is timely, as recent world events indicate a difficult year for multilateral action on disarmament and international peace and security. Last year, we saw renewed efforts to address a broad spectrum of issues related to non-proliferation, multilateral disarmament and international security, including far-reaching questions on cyberspace and outer space activities. International security has continued to deteriorate as the world faces immense peace and security challenges. In that regard, I wish to underline the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and international security, and reiterate that there is no substitute for a multilateral approach to addressing global issues of disarmament in a sustainable manner, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

As the international community continues to await the realization of the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, we seek broader and more concrete measures in the pursuit of the goal of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation. It is evident that the current approach has not managed to offer tangible results that ensure the realization of the goal and the general objectives of a world without weapons of mass destruction.

On 20 September 2017, the historic Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was opened for signature. Its adoption was a welcome development in our search for a world free of weapons of mass destruction. I want to emphasize that the TPNW underlines our shared commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Both

treaties complement each other and establish a clear path towards a world free of weapons of mass destruction.

Equatorial Guinea is well aware that, in order to achieve significant progress in the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, there must be practical and comprehensive confidence-building measures. Indeed, all Member States, particularly nuclear-weapon States, must commit to the existing regimes of transparency, dialogue and verifiable notifications of military reserves and activities.

More than 70 years have passed since the world witnessed the terrifying power of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The destruction and impact of the twin bombs still resonate today. The unfortunate incidents left a legacy of devastation and long-term negative impact on the environment and, fundamentally, on the lives of the people affected. Therefore, the time has come for the world to unequivocally and unanimously express the goal of ensuring a world free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. It is also time to raise our voices against the slow pace of nuclear disarmament and to call on all Member States to comply with the legal obligations and the implementation of the commitments assumed by the nuclear-weapon States.

For Equatorial Guinea, the highest priority remains nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. To that end, the contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones to the objectives of the NPT, including nuclear disarmament, as well as other contributions to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all regions of the world, should be maintained and expanded.

The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and the nuclear-weapon-free zone of Central Asia, as well as the nuclear-weapon-free State of Mongolia, contribute significantly to achieving the general objective of a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. They improve global and regional peace and security, strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contribute to the realization of the objectives of nuclear disarmament and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

In that context, the Government of Equatorial Guinea reiterates its ongoing commitment to the Treaty of Pelindaba, which entered into force on 15 July 2009. The Treaty reaffirms, inter alia, the status of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and shields Africa by avoiding the parking of nuclear explosive devices on the continent and prohibiting the testing of such weapons throughout the African continent.

This year will mark the thirty-second anniversary of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, based in Lomé. Despite its limited resources, the Centre has continued to offer technical assistance to States throughout the African region. In 2015, the Centre oversaw the participation of more than 1,000 representatives of Governments and regional organizations, as well as more than 2,000 members of civil society through a wide range of activities. The Centre needs help in promoting its mandate. We welcome the Centre's efforts and its management, and we take this opportunity to request more alliances and more assistance to boost its efforts and ensure that it fulfils its mandate.

My country emphasizes the importance of continued respect for the inalienable right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and highlights the central role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in that regard, through the ongoing commitments of States to the implementation of the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards System and the provision of technical assistance and cooperation.

We also stress humanitarian considerations in the context of deliberations on weapons of mass destruction, particularly in the light of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use or detonation of nuclear weapons, either by accident or as a deliberate measure. We therefore stress the importance of General Assembly resolution 70/47 and call on all States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to take into account the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of these weapons on human health, the environment and vital economic resources, inter alia, and to take the necessary measures to dismantle and give up these weapons. It is in this context that I once again welcome the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The continued existence and possession of nuclear weapons does not guarantee security; rather, they subtract from it. Our world, including outer space, must be free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. It is in this context that my country

insists on the need for nuclear-weapon States to stop modernizing, renewing or extending the life of their nuclear weapons and related facilities.

In Equatorial Guinea, we also underscore the importance of achieving universal accession to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), taking into account the special responsibilities of nuclear-weapon States in this regard. Our delegation welcomes the convening of the eighth Ministerial Conference on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held in New York on 21 September 2016, and supports the international community in remaining committed to the promotion of the CTBT. We call on all nuclear-weapon States, those States that have not yet acceded to the NPT, those that are listed in annex 2 of the CTBT, and those that have not yet signed or ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to do so without delay.

Equatorial Guinea reaffirms the importance of the work entrusted to the Conference on Disarmament and expresses its concern at the many years of stalemate that have prevented the Conference from fulfilling its mandate as the single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum. I call on the Conference on Disarmament to resume its substantive work, bearing in mind the security interests of all States and without further delay.

Furthermore, we are concerned that the United Nations Disarmament Commission has been unable to reach consensus on recommendations since 1999. Nevertheless, I welcome the adoption in April 2017 of recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. Indeed, it is important to stress the importance, not only of preserving the Commission, but also of achieving its negotiating goals.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Like other members of the Security Council, I too am pleased to see the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan presiding over today's meeting, which is dedicated to strengthening confidence-building measures. Unfortunately, around the world and in the Security Council in particular, there is indeed insufficient confidence and insufficient trust, and that is evident. What kind of trust or confidence can there be if some countries — and given that Russia was mentioned by name, I will take the liberty to mention them by name: the United States and the United Kingdom — continue to manipulate the Security Council and the social sentiment of the international community?

Perhaps their statements were written in advance, and they did not have sufficient time to revise their drafts after they had heard our statement. But, no, this is being done deliberately. We are deliberately not being heard, and our positions are being distorted. They erroneously claim that we are responsible for closing the Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) because we vetoed the draft resolution on its extension. However, they shamefully forget to mention that we proposed a draft resolution that would have extended the JIM and improve its effectiveness, efficiency, professionalism and impartiality, which they did not allowed to be adopted. We proposed that draft resolution because the JIM completely discredited itself with a mendacious report that withstood no criticism.

I would ask a couple of rhetorical questions. Who in essence vetoed our draft resolution, and who was the last to do it? It is those very countries — the United States and the United Kingdom — that, without blinking an eye, are today accusing us of doing this. Who closed the JIM? I will say once again what was already repeatedly said in consultations on the Syrian chemical-weapons dossier: Stop your games at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons — we know the aim of those games — and demonstrate your readiness to establish a genuinely independent and professional mechanism, if you want honest cooperation, and not a smokescreen for political manipulation". The needed trust would then emerge.

There should be no illusions about this. We need a new mechanism that is approved by the Security Council. In our view, any other alternatives or agreements in a narrow format will be illegitimate.

The President: The representative of the United Kingdom has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Field (United Kingdom): I simply would like to restate the facts of which everyone in the Security Council is well aware: Russia was — and we accept this fact — a key player in creating the Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). We were very delighted to see that it played its full role in that regard. The Security Council will recall that Russia voted to establish the

JIM (resolution 2235 (2015)). It voted in favour of a report and resolutions that set out the very detailed methodology that the JIM was to follow.

This was an independent expert body. It then made a key undisputed finding of fact: the fact that the Syrian regime — the regime of Al-Assad — had gassed its own people. These were the facts that Russia then did not like and so it was on that basis that it chose to veto the JIM, and in so doing, it set back the whole issue of non-proliferation and all of our efforts and destroyed a global consensus against the use of chemical weapons. This is very dangerous precedent, as I said in my original comments. It was also, I think, a sad day for us all here in the Security Council, but most importantly it was a calamity for the Syrian people.

I would therefore simply urge Russia to use the very considerable influence that it wields to stop Al-Assad from using chemical weapons in future and to comply with his country's obligations. We recognize that Russia is playing an important part in the Iranian issue, so it is not that Russia is being obstructive across the board, but in relation to the Syrian matter, as I said, with an expert independent body that came up with a report that Russia did not like, it sought to veto it, which sends an extremely dangerous signal for future nuclear proliferators and one that I think we should all roundly condemn.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.8161

Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8161st meeting

Thursday, 18 January 2018, 1 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Abdrakhmanov	(Kazakhstan)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	Ethiopia	Mr. Woldegerima
	France	Mr. Michon
	Kuwait	Mr. Almunayekh
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Tenya
	Poland	Mr. Radomski
	Russian Federation	Mr. Ilnichev
	Sweden	Mr. Vaverka
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Roberts
	United States of America	Ms. Tachco

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

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The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Council has before it the text of a statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank Council members for their valuable contributions to this statement.

In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2018/1.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.